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Entered

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER



Wm. W. W. W. W. W.
Henry Smith

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

THE STORY OF SIXTY YEARS
MOST OF THEM MISSPENT BY

LIEUT.-COL. SIR HENRY SMITH, K.C.B.

WITH A PORTRAIT

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G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF CANADA

PREFACE

IN July of last year I was talking in the Junior Carlton Club with one of the Metropolitan Police Magistrates, second to none in knowledge of his work. The talk was professional, prolonged, post-prandial, and much to our mutual edification.

“Why don't you write your reminiscences?” he asked. “There is no man living with your experience.”

“There are too many difficulties in the way,” I replied; “and I question if they would make a readable volume.”

Not a month afterwards I was staying with one of my oldest friends at St. Mary's Tower, Birnam, and there I met a man of great ability, the only Scotch minister, I believe I am correct in stating, who belongs to the Alpine Club, and who knows the slopes of the Matterhorn or the Grepon as well as he used to know the stair leading up to his own pulpit.

“You must write your reminiscences,” he said.

“It seems fated I should do so,” I replied reflectively.

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“Why,” he continued, “had a shorthand writer been behind that screen to-night, the volume you are so diffident about would have been more than half written already.”

“Hinc illæ lacrymæ,” which, freely translated, means, “That’s how it all came about.”

Half a century and fifteen years “forbye,” although not quite the allotted span, despatches more across the river in that ferry-boat than it retains on this side. It is indeed a long look back, and looking back is sometimes fatal; but my memory is a retentive one, and there are few important events, more especially during my police career, of which I have not a vivid recollection.

To quote accurately the *ipsissima verba* spoken by me, or to me, during a period of over six decades—often, moreover, in what a member of the General Assembly termed “the *dishabeel* of conversation”—is, needless to say, an impossibility. It is only their purport the accuracy of which I guarantee.

The remarks made many years ago by a certain critic on a certain book, I recollect, impressed me greatly. “There is much here,” he wrote, “that is true, and much that is new; but what is true is not new, and what is new is not true”—terse, clever, and conclusive.

I am not apprehensive of such a verdict in my own case, and I can honestly say it would not be a fair one were it delivered.

PREFACE

When a man aspires to enter the House of Commons, he holds innumerable meetings, and devotes all his eloquence to convince the electorate that he is the very best man they could possibly choose. He must, and he does, spend weeks, occasionally months, and sometimes years, in blowing loud and long-continued blasts on his own trumpet. When they have got him, he may prove disappointing, but to have the chance of distinguishing himself is what he wants.

So, in writing a book, the author, to get it floated, must adopt similar tactics. He must make his preface attractive; he must put something in it to excite curiosity, something to "hold" the reader who takes his volume up, something to prevent him from throwing it disdainfully aside to look for a better.

With this view, I will only mention three events upon which I look back with, I hope I may say, pardonable pride.

I entered the ranks of the City of London Police, and in less than six years rose to be Commissioner.

I am the only man who has commanded both police forces of the Metropolis on the occasion of a great State function, and I am, moreover, the only man—there never was, and, needless to say, there never can be another—whom Queen Victoria made a Knight Commander of the Bath, neither the Premier (Lord Salisbury) nor the Home Secretary (Sir Matthew Ridley) having been taken into her

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confidence or been made acquainted with her intention.

How the Court of Common Council appointed me Sir James Fraser's successor; how, when the Shah visited London, I made arrangements for his safety, eluding an Act of Parliament; and how the Queen, on the occasion of the Jubilee in 1897, was delighted with everything, but more especially with the way in which her "guests" got back from St. Paul's to Buckingham Palace in good time, is fully detailed in my last chapter.

HENRY SMITH.

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FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

I

TREATS PARTLY OF MYSELF, MOSTLY OF ROBERT
LOUIS STEVENSON

My father, grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather were all ministers of the Church of Scotland. "Smith" was good enough for them, and is good enough for me. Had we wished to be *genteel* we could have changed to "Smythe," but the Lyon King-of-Arms wanted a considerable sum for the change, and we thought the gentility dear at the price.

My grandfather, minister of the parish of Galston, in Ayrshire, was well known to Burns, and was most indignant at what the poet wrote of him in "The Holy Fair." The lines ran thus :

" But hark ! the tent has changed its voice ;
 There's peace and rest nae langer :
For a' the real judges rise,
 They canna sit for anger.

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Smith opens out his cauld harangues
On practice and on morals,
And aff the godly pour in thrangs
To gie the jars and barrels
A lift that day.

“What signifies his barren shine
Of moral powers and reason?
His English style and gesture fine
Are a' clean out o' season.
Like Socrates or Antonine,
Or some auld Pagan heathen,
The moral man he does define,
But ne'er a word o' faith in
That's right that day.”

Burns meant to be complimentary, most people thought, and he in turn was indignant at being misunderstood, and took his revenge in “The Kirk's Alarm,” as follows :

“Irinside ! Irinside !
Wi' your turkey-cock pride,
Of manhood but sma' is your share ;
Ye've the figure, 'tis true,
Even your foes will allow,
And your friends, they dare grant you nac mair.
Irinside ! Your friends they dare grant you nac mair
mair.”

The feud was too bitter to be patched up, and Dr. Smith never forgave him to the day of his death.

A letter written nearly a hundred years ago by Dr. Smith to his five sons, my uncles, when stricken with what proved to be a fatal illness, I found in

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an old desk quite recently. I give it exactly as he wrote it.

It goes far to convince me, whatever the poet thought or wrote of him, that my grandfather was a minister certainly not inferior to those of his time.

“Written on the morning after I sent a description of my case to Dr. Freer.

“GALSTON MANSE,
“June 23, 1818.

“MY DEAR SONS WILLIAM, ADAM, GEORGE,
DAVID, JOHN,

“You are all the sons of my strength and of my affection, and I may truly say, ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped us all.’ It hath pleased God to visit me with a painful complaint, for the removal of which I have been using the remedies prescribed; it appears to me still with little success, and should Divine Providence so order it that my days are but short by it, may I be prepared for the event, and submit willingly to God’s wise determination. I have enjoyed a long life—much longer than any of my contemporaries. I have been blessed with an affectionate wife, and with a large and prosperous family. Difficulties we have had to struggle with, but have been borne through them all, and we have the greatest reason to bless God, who hath provided us all things so largely, and while others were weeping and sorrowing around us, has kept our eyes

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from tears and our feet from falling. In my present state, while I express my thankfulness to the Almighty for His undeserved kindness to myself and all my family, it is equally proper that I should express a sense of my gratitude to God, and confess my many sins of omissions of duty, with all of which *He* is well acquainted, but which I trust *He* will graciously, and for His own name's sake, forgive.

“As a minister of Christ, I give the full assent of my mind and heart to the great and fundamental truths of revealed religion—the Being of God, the mission of Christ with this world, our lost state by nature and sin, my belief in and acceptance of Christ as the great propitiation, my full assurance of the necessity of the Holy Ghost, and my hope of eternal life through Jesus, who bore our sins in His own body on the tree.

“To them and the other great doctrines of our holy religion I bespeak your closest and unwearied attention, and you will find them comfortable in life, and the one thing needful when ye look forward to an eternal world. It is commendable and necessary to attend to the things of this life, but study to keep them in their own place, and never let them occupy that room in your hearts which ought to be dedicated to God and religion. Prayer to God is not an unmanly exercise, but well helps a fallen, sinful, and needy creature such as man is.

“Be not, therefore, ashamed to address your Maker as seated on a Throne of Grace, and you

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will obtain mercy and find grace to help you in every time of need. If you thus cultivate an acquaintance with love, and such communion with Him in the way of His own appointment, I am warranted to say that He never will leave or forsake you.

“ I exhort you all to live together in the strictest and closest bonds of brotherly affection. This is amiable in the eyes of God, and cannot fail to be attended with the most beneficial consequences to yourselves.

“ Should it now please God to remove me from this scene of labour and sorrow, my removal will make a difference to your mother in many ways and respects. She must and will feel the want and protection and friendship of a husband, who has endeavoured to be a kind husband to her ; and her worldly comforts must also be considerably diminished, but I have no fears on this score. There will still be enough, and I commit her and you all, both sons and daughters, to that God who hath promised to be the husband of the widow and the father of all the fatherless.

“ I have no doubt of the affection of any of you, and your own hearts will suggest the propriety of your warmly and constantly expressing that affection in any way that may soothe and console the best of mothers. Your unmarried sisters will claim your advice and protection, in the next place ; and from the kind and brotherly manner in which you

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have hitherto mixed together, I augur very favourably of the continuance and sincerity of your friendship.

“ Your married sisters are happy under the protection of good husbands, who, I pray, may be long spared to them, but you will, of course, find it, I trust, both your duty and inclination to live in the most friendly habits with them, and with their husbands and families.

“ Being all of you at a distance from me at present, and in great prospects of seeing you, I have given vent to my feelings in committing these few things to paper, which is a relief to my mind, and which I trust you will consider as a token of my affection, and that ye are all upon my heart. Receive it as a proof of my parental affection, and forget not the few advices that I have thought it my duty to give you.

“ May the blessing of the Almighty rest on your mother and on every one of our children! And although we must be separated for a time, I pray to God, and I trust through the merits of Jesus we shall be all united together in a better and happier world, never to part again.

“ I remain, with the warmest affection, my dear sons,

“ Your affectionate father,

“ (Signed) GEORGE SMITH.”

My father was minister of the “ second charge ” in Kilmarnock, where he had hard work, and did

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much towards allaying the panic on the occasion of the terrible outbreak of cholera in 1831 ; then of the parish of Penpont, in Dumfriesshire, one of the Duke of Buccleuch's livings, a most beautiful place near Drumlanrig Castle, where I first saw the light of day ; and was finally, at the " Disruption," transferred to the Tolbooth, Edinburgh, now the Assembly Hall.

In 1866—or I think I should be correct in saying long before that date—Mr. Gladstone had obtained an ascendancy in the political world never previously and never subsequently reached by any other statesman. That year my father died, and I remember well how, years before, he used to assert that strikes among the labouring classes, and other changes for the worse in the country, were the direct outcome of Mr. Gladstone's speeches, and to prophesy that evil would befall England should that ascendancy continue. He may have been correct or he may not, but of this I am thoroughly convinced : that had Mr. Gladstone been alive at the present time, notwithstanding his attempt to get a Bill for Home Rule through the House of Commons, thereby shattering his reputation and his party, he would have been the very first to denounce the unscrupulous tactics and the unparalleled vulgarity of some of the Liberal leaders.

My father's sister married Dr. Balfour of Colinton, grandfather of Robert Louis Stevenson. Thus

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I am the cousin once removed of that marvellous but ill-fated novelist.

I was asked quite recently to write yet another Stevensonian book, embodying my recollections of "Lou" as a child. I began, but soon, to use a sporting expression, "turned it up." Nearly everything that could be written of him and his forbears the public already has, yet there are one or two stories still untold which might interest my readers.

The spire of the Assembly Hall always appeared to me very graceful, but, knowing as much of architecture as Mr. Pecksniff, I never hazarded an opinion on its beauties. Walking along Princes Street one day with "Tom" Stevenson, he suddenly pulled up on the pavement a little to the west of the New Club, and asked me what I thought of it.

"It's rather like Salisbury, is it not?" I said.

"Like Salisbury?" he replied indignantly. "Salisbury is rather like it. That spire is infinitely superior, look at it from what point of view you may."

Stevenson was a lighthouse architect pure and simple; but if he knew as much of churches and spires as he did of his own trade, modern Athens has long had in its midst what it has utterly failed to appreciate.

When Lou was about six or seven years of age I was constantly at 17, Heriot Row. He was even then suffering much, and was care-

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fully watched over by his parents and his old nurse, "Cummie." One evening—it seems to me but as yesterday—Cummie was watching by his bedside—she seldom left it—and, thinking her charge asleep, went downstairs to supper. It was the hour of "family worship," never under any circumstances omitted, morning or evening. Thomas Stevenson had finished "the chapter," and was offering up a prayer—needless to say, extempore—when a very small figure in its nightshirt showed itself at the open door of the dining-room. "Why don't you speak louder?" it said. "I can't hear a single word." The appearance was sudden and unexpected, the disappearance perhaps more so. "Why did I leave you, my own boy?" was the subdued and breathless exclamation of poor Cummie, who had rushed upstairs; and the little child was hurried off to his bed. His father paused and looked up, but said not a word. He had that to do which must be done with no unseemly interruption from anyone. He finished his prayer without haste, and got up from his knees, and not till next morning did he allude to "that self-willed boy, who must assuredly have taken cold." Cummie, I am sorry to say, is now scarcely sound in wind and limb, but she is clear as ever in intellect, and her memory, as far as her boy is concerned, never seems to fail her. I met her by appointment at Colinton only two years ago, and a very long talk we had, principally about "Lou and

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his novels." "He didna make much money by them, after all his work," she said sorrowfully. "And then," she added, after some hesitation, "I never could read some o' the last o' them without fairly losing my temper." "Why so?" I asked. "Well, you see," she replied, "there was another name coupled with his—the name of his stepson—and I never liked that." She had, she told me, a respect both for Lloyd Osbourne and his mother. "They were both clever—very clever—but why should his name, or any other name, appear on a title-page with my boy's? Ay," she continued, "but, clever as they were, they were na born at Colinton. There never was a family like the family at the manse. The daughters—God bless them!—never gave father or mother an hour's anxiety, but the sons, till they settled down, were wild and venturesome, John in particular." John, the eldest, until Cummie mentioned him, I had almost forgotten, so long it is since he was gathered to his fathers. His career, indeed, was a strange one, with a hopeless beginning and a happy, if not prosperous, ending. Lodging in Edinburgh, and studying medicine, he fell in love—or fancied he did—in his twentieth year with a woman he met in the street, and married her—a woman who, with others of her class, was known to a good many students besides John, and whose tiny bottines had gone far to wearing out the pavement about the Register House and the east end of Princes Street.

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Ere a week was over his head he came to his senses, and a more miserable boy did not exist. Night after night he made his way to Colinton, and wandered round the manse, thinking of the father and mother whose hearts he had well-nigh broken. The misery of one moonlight night in particular, recounted to me many years afterwards—when a window was opened, and the voices of those he loved were plainly audible—might serve as a beacon-light, powerful as the Skerryvore, to warn youth from a fate worse than death itself. But the millstone he had tied round his neck did not hang there long. The Scythe-bearer came to the rescue, and his wife was numbered with the dead.

Of all the family at the manse Aunt Jane was the most interesting, the best-loved. A more unselfish woman never lived. What she did for everyone—for her father and mother, for her uncles and aunts, for her nephews and nieces—in sickness and health, up to the very day of her death, it would be difficult to exaggerate.

On May 8, 1907—a lovelier day never dawned—her mortal remains were laid in the grave. Her nearest surviving relative, I stood at her head. Her resting-place was Colinton Church-yard, within a stone's-throw of the manse, where twelve brothers and sisters had come and gone, and left her to follow, the last of her race. As we stood and heard, "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," a sun of almost tropical intensity, but

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tempered by the keen east wind, beat down on us, and, as numberless recollections crowded o'er me, I thought, had it not been for this east wind, young bones might have made old ones, and all might have been different. Lauded by a great writer, did it not drive a still greater into exile—drive him thousands of miles from the land he loved, to find his last resting-place among the islands of the Pacific? But for that east wind, might he not have lain some day by the side of his grandfather, that stern but honest old divine, slaughtered too by that very wind? for though he had long passed the three-score and ten, he was hale and hearty, and might have lived another twenty years, save for the enemy of his race. Might not Louis have found his rest almost within view of Swanston Cottage, and within hearing of the "war slogan" of the oldest herd on the Pentlands?

II

MAY INTEREST BOYS OF MODERN ATHENS

IN 1846 I was sent to the Edinburgh Academy, joining the first class, commonly called the "Geits." I was head boy, or dux, of the class, and gained the medal. In the second I was again dux. In the third I was ousted from the premier position by James Colquhoun—"the hated Colquhoun." In the fourth I turned the tables on him, and was dux again. In the fifth and sixth I grievously disappointed my backers, and didn't even get a "place," being fourth each year. In my last year—I did not stay for the seventh class—I annexed the prize for Latin verse. The verse in question was, the Rector said, as good as any pupil had ever handed in in his time. I put my name to it—that was about all. The fabricator was James Carmichael, my tutor. I also got the prize for geography, which I really deserved.

I was, I must admit, very much of a failure, and I scarcely think the Rev. John Hannah was grieved at my departure. He did not exactly say that "turkey-cock pride" had descended to me, but he did say I thought too much of myself, and he never

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said a truer word. I continued to do so for a short time, but I can honestly aver that I very soon found my level. A potent factor towards this desirable result was a young lady, one of the beauties of Edinburgh, to whom I was introduced at an evening party in the Royal Circus. Cool and collected, she was sitting on an ottoman when I was led up literally to the slaughter. I commenced by making some disparaging remarks on Edinburgh—what a slow place it was, etc. Feeling about for her glass, she stuck it in her eye, and calmly surveyed me. “Dear me!” she said, “how very unfortunate! I wouldn’t stay here if I were you. Why not try London—or Paris?” After this, like Wellington at Waterloo, I could only “pray for the darkness,” and my earnest desire was to get away from her. The retreat was easily accomplished—a deal simpler than Sir John Moore’s at Corunna, for, having had her say, she took no further notice of me. Had she only known the good she had done me, I think she would have been gratified; for a youth more conscious of defeat, or feeling smaller, Edinburgh, I believe, has seldom contained.

John Hay Athole Macdonald, Lord Justice Clerk of Scotland, is the most distinguished man the class turned out. I was, as I have already mentioned, at the top, and he was at the bottom, but somehow or other we have got reversed since then.*

* When Martin Chuzzlewit was asked by Colonel Diver what he thought of Mr. Jefferson Brick’s last article in the *New York*

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Before leaving the Edinburgh Academy, I might tell one or two anecdotes connected with the old school.

There are very few of my class now surviving. W. C. Maughan, commonly called "Nobby," is still, I believe, above ground. Nobby was an excellent fellow, but prone to get into trouble with his preceptors. One little misunderstanding with Dr. Gloag, and another with Dr. Hannah, are worth recording. The former was a kind and painstaking teacher, but, like most of us, had his peculiarities, and when put out of temper was a very awkward customer. He had a short, stiff pointer, which he used with effect, not only in connection with mathematical and algebraical problems, but on the ribs and knuckles of his pupils. One day Nobby and I had been playing fives, and, to our consternation, found ourselves late when the bell rang after "the quarter." We ran for our lives with our jackets over our arms. I got mine quite on, but Nobby was inserting one arm and showing a good deal of shirt-sleeve as he entered the class-room. "Impertinent scoundrel that you are!" shouted old Gloag, catching sight of him—"impertinent scoundrel that you are, comin' in wantin' your cott!" and, rushing at him, he pointered him up and down the room till Nobby scrambled over form

Romdy, "Why, it's horribly personal," he replied. To write reminiscences without being personal is, to my mind, an art yet to be discovered.

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after form and got out of his reach. I never saw Gloag so angry ; he was positively furious, and for half an hour kept looking very hard every now and then at the unfortunate Nobby and breaking out at him again. None of us could see the heinousness of Nobby's crime, and all sympathized with him for having brought down on his head such unmerited punishment.

In the other episode, when Dr. Hannah was bent on having his blood, Nobby emerged triumphant from what at first looked like a very serious predicament. The Rector was in the habit of reading out once a week some lines in English, of which we were to make Latin or Greek prose or verse, as the case might be, and, when finished, of calling upon someone to read over the lines to make sure that we had all taken them down accurately. On one occasion he fixed on Nobby, who, getting on his legs, read out loudly, "Prune the cauliflower," after which he went on correctly with the rest of the passage. The Rev. John, purple with indignation, made one bound to the bottom of the class, Nobby's habitual domicile, exclaiming : "Do you mean to make a fool of me, my boy—do you mean to make a fool of me?" Nobby started back, saying : "No, sir, I don't. That's what you said, or how could I have it in my notes?" After repeated and earnest asseveration the Rector became pacified, and resumed his seat. "I am bound to believe you, my boy," he said, "but it is unaccountable to me

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how you could have written such nonsense." He sat deep in thought for a couple of minutes, and then—he was very impulsive—made another bound down to Nobby, this time to wring him earnestly by the hand. "I am so glad, my boy—I am so very glad." Then, turning to us, he asked: "Do any of you remember what I said before I gave out the lines?" The answer given by all was in the negative. "I will explain," continued the Rector. "Just as I was beginning to read, I noticed some pushing and jostling at the lower end, and went down to inquire the reason. Walking back to my chair, I turned to you head boys, and said, 'It's room they're calling for,' which Maughan promptly put down as 'Prune the cauliflower.'" The way the Rector carried his mind back and solved the mystery made a deep impression on me and, I fancy, on many others.

Our English master, Mr. Calvert, had three pretty daughters, who played havoc with our young hearts. There was scarcely a boy in the class who did not love one or other, or whose face did not become of a rosy red when he encountered them either in the playground or in the open. For myself, I confess that I was enamoured of all three.

One lovely winter afternoon I made my way out to Duddingston to skate. How well I remember the whir you heard on first catching sight of the loch! Having seated myself on a chair, I was taken in hand

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by a ragged ruffian with a gimlet, who, for twopence remuneration, bored my heels, strapped my feet till all circulation ceased, guided me over the rough ground, and set me going. I hadn't skated fifty yards before I found myself in close proximity to Mr. Calvert and his three enslavers. I was eager to show them what an artist I was, and an encouraging shout, "Ah, Smith, glad to see you! Too busy to speak to a friend?" nerved me to the task. I made a graceful "outside edge" half-circle, intending to get within hand-shaking distance; but pride will have a fall, and I had one, and no mistake. The circle was but half completed, when down I came a regular smasher. All the little boys whom I had hoped to drive wild with jealousy witnessed my discomfiture. I heard the silvery laugh of the sirens, and, scrambling on to my legs, made off in another direction, sorely shaken both in mind and body.

In Gloag's class, as in every other class in my day, we commenced the morning with prayer. Gloag's prayer was soon over, and the instant it was over "Tak' slates" followed. "Lord, look down on us in this school, and espachiously in this cless, for Christ's sake. Amen," it ran. But one morning—whether from an uncontrollable desire to see his pupils safely over the *pons asinorum* with less delay than usual, or to get to work on their knuckles with the pointer, the deponent knoweth not—it is averred that he transposed the

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last words, and concluded with, "Tak' slates. Amen."

On December 6, 1909, I gave a lecture to the boys of the Edinburgh Academy, nearly four hundred in number. I told them how I entered the school "sixty long years ago"; how well I had begun by gaining medal after medal; how, in the subsequent years of my career, I had sunk into well-merited oblivion, and disappointed friends and relatives alike, but that I had very soon discovered my error and striven strenuously to make up leeway—the moral of all this being that the past, however unsatisfactory, may be redeemed. But I was done with the Academy, and the Academy was done with me, and as Robert Louis Stevenson, in his intermittent months of sickness and health, sometimes able, sometimes unable, to leave his room or his bed, determined to educate himself, I in like fashion, having discovered my error, sedulously started to repair it.

About the year 1850 there were in Edinburgh (there may be still) some half-dozen private tutors who taught French, German, drawing, etc., to classes, say, of six to ten boys. On leaving the Academy, and before going to the University, I attended "classes." My French master, a refugee, and, if all tales were true, a man of notoriously bad character, brought us on most admirably, his success in teaching being due entirely to his extreme laziness. He was short, dirty, and round as a

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

barrel, never got out of his armchair, smoked continuously, and would not utter one word of English. "Fermez la porte," was his first greeting when I presented myself to him. "Quel âge avez-vous ? Bien, asseyez-vous." You could not help speaking French, or, at any rate, you could not help trying. The horn was never spoilt with him : a spoon was the inevitable result.

A greater contrast to the Frenchman than my German teacher could not possibly have been found. He was a man of good character—so it was reported—active and energetic, and would not speak one word of German. He had come to England to learn English, and made his pupils teach it him—as they are doing now at the Ritz, the Carlton and Savoy, at Kingussie, Nairn, or Aviemore. Men and boys, from the banks of the Rhine and Moselle, even in those remote times, made a convenience of the confiding Briton, and will continue to do so till the last Dreadnought is built, and they come over "for good" ; till "cakes, leeks, puddings, and potatoes" are things of the past, and *sauer-kraut* reigns in their stead.

Classes were not, I must admit, an unqualified success ; still, I learnt a good deal, and went in a more hopeful spirit to Edinburgh University, where I studied for two years under Kelland and "Paltry Pillans."

What to devote myself to after that I could not decide ; but it was decided for me, and before I

MAY INTEREST BOYS

knew where I was I found myself an apprentice in the office of Brown and Pearson, the eminent accountants in George Street, where, for five years, I was as happy as the day was long. But here circumstances conspired against me. The racket-court was a little bit too contiguous, and in it I spent about as much of my time as I did at the desk. I also joined the Saint Andrew Boat Club, commonly called the "Gallows Club," some evilly disposed person having asserted that every member of that sporting coterie had come, or would eventually come, to the halter. That same year a sailor was sentenced to death, and I determined to go up to the High Street to see the execution. My mother implored me not to go to such a demoralizing spectacle; my father, on the other hand, took a different view of the question, thinking it would turn me sick. "Let him go," he said; "he'll never wish to see another." When, however, I came back with an improved appetite, and looking as fit as the proverbial fiddle, they didn't know whether to be pleased or disgusted. Calcraft officiated, and gave the patient a short drop of not more than two feet. I little thought then how many executions I was destined to witness.

I finished my apprenticeship, and passed "C.A." The next step was "C.B."

In my father's house we often had guests at dinner, but seldom or ever at breakfast. That morning, however—it was two or three days after

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a knife or other lethal weapon, with which, after his drunken bout, he might, in a fit of remorse, cut his throat. My orders were to search all prisoners for their own safety, but the legality of the proceeding is, I am well aware, open to doubt.

III

HOW I MIGRATED TO THE SECOND CITY OF THE EMPIRE, AND HOW I RETURNED TO EDINBURGH —MY FATHER INTRODUCES SOME OF HIS FRIENDS AND SOME OF MINE—SHOWS HOW A DANGEROUS ILLNESS OVERTOOK ME, AND HOW A YOUNG GIRL, FAIR BUT FRAIL, NARROWLY ESCAPED THE GALLOWES

ALMOST before I had realized the distinguished position to which I had attained—that of C.A. —I was offered the appointment of book-keeper in a Glasgow house at a salary of £100 per annum, which I accepted. The office was in Buchanan Street, and, from a sanitary point of view, could not well have been worse. The work was very hard—from 9.30 a.m. to 6 p.m.—and glad I was to get home in the evening to my rooms in Sauchiehall Street—a “single-breasted” street, as the tailor said contemptuously of Princes Street.

My landlady, who answered to the name of Bullock, was a strikingly handsome, white-haired old woman of about sixty-five or seventy. She was an excellent cook, and often did I congratulate

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myself on having so happily lit on my feet, and often did I wonder how such rooms could have stood empty for a single day. Everything went well for just three months, when my tenancy came to an abrupt conclusion. My rooms were on the first-floor above a grocer's shop, and the door was always easy to open by means of a pass-key. One evening, however, I could not get it back more than about six inches. There was evidently something heavy behind it. The place was in total darkness, and, though I shouted my best, I could get no answer. "Somebody has made cold beef of my old bullock," I said to myself. "The first thing to do is to get a policeman." Just as I was shutting the door again I heard a step close behind me, and, determined to sell my life dearly, turned round to confront the murderer, when I found myself *vis-à-vis* to the friendly grocer.

"I heard you shouting, sir," he said, "and I followed up to tell you it was all right."

"All right!" I ejaculated. "All wrong would be nearer it."

"I didn't quite mean that," he replied, "but it's only the old woman again."

"You can't mean that it's her carcass that stops the way?"

"That's it, sir," was the reply. "The woman has been here now for ten years, and I've never known her keep sober so long before. She'll be drunk for a fortnight now. If you want to get

HOW I MIGRATED

your dinner, sir, I'll see to this for you ; her son lives close by. We'll get in at the window and put her to bed."

I passed the night at a neighbouring hotel, and in the morning had an interview with Bullock *fils*.

The story he told me was a sad one. His mother up to the age of sixty was practically an abstainer. She then had a dangerous illness, and the doctor prescribed brandy. It allayed pain and gave her sleep. " But I soon saw," her son said, " it had got the mastery over her. Everything I could do I have done, but her case is hopeless."

The remainder of my time in Glasgow was uneventful. Dr. Pritchard alone relieved the monotony. This gentleman poisoned his wife and mother-in-law, and they were not his first victims. He was condemned to death, and duly executed, Calcraft again officiating. I did not give a garden-party on the occasion, not having a garden, but, hearing that some members of the Gallows Club were anxious to see the doctor's exit, I invited them to breakfast. Four joyfully accepted, but only one turned up (the night previous), Donald Campbell, of the 92nd, called by his familiars " Bally," after his property, Ballyveolan, in the West Highlands, and Donald and I saw the hypocritical, blasphemous, and cruel murderer satisfactorily hanged on Glasgow Green, a tremendous crowd being present. I had migrated meantime to Bath Street, where I put Donald up, my new rooms and my new land-

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lady being a terrible come-down from Sauchiehall Street in comfort and cookery. Had the poor old Bullock only kept on the perpendicular I would almost rather have had her, alcoholic though she was, but to clamber over the barricade every night to get to bed would have been, to say the least of it, inconvenient.

I was fairly happy in Glasgow, but I did not like the place or the people, and when my engagement ended I was very glad to return to Edinburgh. But two years' absence made all the difference. I had no business to succeed to, no partnership to expect, and the outlook was far from promising. My father was still alive, and I had a comfortable and happy home, but I led, and I felt it, an unprofitable existence. The home, moreover, though happy, had always been, as was afterwards discovered, insanitary. The discovery came too late for me. The stable-door was carefully shut, but the steed had been stolen, and I was attacked with diphtheria—in those days nearly always fatal. The case was described as a mild one; I often wondered what a severe one was like. But whether correctly described or not, it altered my whole future.

I was sent to Harrogate to recruit, and while I was there my father died, and my mother left Edinburgh to live in London.

A better father never boys had, and our grief at his death was intense. Without neglecting the

HOW I RETURNED TO EDINBURGH

more serious business of life, or allowing us to do so, he was constantly thinking of our amusements, and how to get us some good fishing or shooting in holiday time. He was a good fisherman himself, and a first-class shot, and before we started on some expedition—our favourite resort was Tibbie Shiels—would carefully go over our casts and flies to see that there was no flaw in our armour. All this we used to think of when he was gone, and to recall his after-dinner stories, and the inimitable way in which he used to tell them.

There were few men better known in Edinburgh in my father's time than John Thomson Gordon, Sheriff of the Lothians, and son-in-law of Christopher North, a welcome guest at dinners, public and private. One evening the Sheriff and my father met at Holyrood—on what occasion need not be mentioned; suffice it to say that the scarlet liveries of royalty were much in evidence. Light refreshments were handed round by the menials wearing them, and also large trays, on which were placed every conceivable drink calculated to make glad the heart of man. When the Sheriff's turn came to have a tray presented to him he subjected the various drinks to a keen scrutiny, and seeing some large tumblers, the contents of which were hot, he asked what the beverage was called.

“That, my lord,” said the man, “is toda.”

“Ah,” said the Sheriff, annexing two tumblers, and placing them in a recess behind him, “I'll take

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toda"—a drink of which, if all tales be true, he had had considerable experience.

The minister of Kinnoul, in Perthshire, used to come frequently to help my father at "the preachings," and to him I am indebted for the two following baptismal anecdotes.

A great, big, powerful ruffian, with an evil notoriety *per mare et terram*, well known to the watchers on the river and the keepers on the land, whose "delight it was of a shiny night" to burn the water and net the grouse, married a pretty young girl, who in due time presented him with a son. The man, who spent his Sundays in similar fashion to the bricklayer in "Bleak House," knew well enough what the minister thought of him, and was reluctant to go near the manse. But the infant had to be baptized, and one evening, having removed a three days' beard, and donned his Sunday breeks, "a' spiled wi' lyin' by for weeks," he presented himself with the child in his arms, and humbly asked the minister to baptize it next Sunday. His reception was the reverse of cordial. After rebuking him in no measured terms for the life he was leading, his drunken habits, and his cruelty to his wife, the minister, as is the custom, put a few questions to him regarding the ordinance, and how it originated, not one of which he could answer. "Robert," said his reverence severely, "you are not fit to hold up that child." "Haud up the wain!" replied the man, tossing it up towards

MY FATHER INTRODUCES FRIENDS

the ceiling—"damn! A waud haud it up an it was a caulf!"

Another man of a very different type, respectable himself and respectable in his surroundings, called one evening at the manse on a similar errand. His wife had coached him well; but the ordeal was too much for him. Almost before the minister could get a word in, he went off "at score": "Baptism is a sacrament in itself sinful, whereby, upon condition of perfect obedience, all the miseries in this life, daith itself, and the pains o' hell for ever, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers."

Although not absolutely correct, he had got most of it, and he passed with honours.

Another anecdote of my father I must tell. He was not considered a good preacher, but as a raconteur and after-dinner orator he was hard to beat. He was Chaplain to the Royal Company of Archers, Queen's Body-Guard for Scotland, and on one occasion, at their hall, was consulted by the Lord President, John Inglis, whom he happened to be sitting next (whose reputation, had it not already been made, would have been made by his defence of Madeleine Smith), as to what he should say on the occasion of some impending banquet.

"*You* ask advice from *me*?" said my father in the utmost astonishment.

"My dear Doctor," replied Inglis, "to make a speech with your wig on and to make a speech without are widely different things."

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And apropos of after-dinner oratory: "Bill" Rogers, Rector of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, known throughout the length and breadth of London, lived in Devonshire Square, close to Petticoat Lane, in the "far east." Bill was a very intimate friend of mine—his portrait looks down on me as I write—and took a great interest in the men of the City Police and everything connected with them, the police ball in particular, held annually, shortly after Christmas, in the Cannon Street Hotel. He always gave a dinner on these occasions, driving thereafter to the ball with his guests. In the year 1893, I think it was, there were present the Lord Chief Justice, Russell of Killowen, and another lawyer, probably the cleverer man of the two—Frank Lockwood; Godfrey Lushington, permanent Under-Secretary at the Home Office; Sir Charles Fremantle, Deputy Master of the Mint; John du Plat Taylor, Colonel of the 24th Middlesex, or Post Office Rifles, as good a fellow and as good an officer as one could meet; the rector's curate, the late Rev. R. H. Hadden, of St. Mark's, North Audley Street, and one of His Majesty's chaplains; and Major E. F. Wodehouse, my assistant, now Assistant Commissioner at Scotland Yard, and the best policeman bar none in London. As regards Fremantle and Taylor, on this occasion, and on many previous and subsequent ones, they were unapproachable; Demosthenes himself would not have been "in it" with them. I had always to

MY FATHER INTRODUCES FRIENDS

“say a few words” ; the rector followed ; and then, with my leave, he had everyone who dined with him “on his legs.” When dinner was finished in Devonshire Square, I took Russell aside, and told him what was in store for him.

“I won’t speak,” he said vehemently. “What can I say at a ball?”

So vehement was he that he was barely civil. Before we got to Cannon Street, however, he thanked me for the hint I had given him. I warned Lockwood also, who was infinitely more courteous, but quite as averse to speaking. Everything turned out as I had predicted. But, notwithstanding the notice these two legal luminaries had received, worse speeches than they made I can conscientiously say it has seldom been my misfortune to listen to.

The mention of Madeleine Smith a few pages back reminds me that a barrister has been engaged for some years, and I think is still engaged, in reproducing in book form the most celebrated criminal trials of bygone times. In recording Madeleine’s case, he says : “The mystery as to her guilt or innocence can never now be solved.” What the late Lord Advocate told me solved it, at any rate, to my satisfaction.

L’Angelier, her lover, was in the habit of going, late in the evening, to No. 7, Blythswood Square, where Madeleine resided with her father, tapping at the bedroom window, and gaining admittance to

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the house when everyone was asleep, and on those visits Madeleine would sometimes make him a cup of coffee or cocoa.

She made two unsuccessful attempts to poison him, and on both occasions it was clearly proved that he had been at her window a few hours before he was taken ill—the window at which on many previous occasions he had knocked.

On her third and successful attempt, the Lord Advocate was unable to prove at the trial that they had met that evening, or that L'Angelier had been at the window, or inside the house. The evidence, however, which was essential to her conviction was subsequently volunteered by more than one witness; but the Lord Justice Clerk, Hope, ruled it inadmissible, the trial having begun. It is interesting to note the difference in the criminal law north and south of the Tweed. In England evidence for or against the prisoner would be accepted at the very last moment, even had the jury retired to consider their verdict. In Scotland it is not so, and the Judge's ruling was correct.

Independently of all this, the Lord Advocate had in his possession documentary evidence, which he proposed putting in, quite sufficient to hang Madeleine, but that evidence was also ruled inadmissible.

If ever man deserved poisoning it was L'Angelier—a hound who seduced a young girl, and, on her getting engaged to a respectable man, held

AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY

her letters *in terrorem* over her and threatened to show them.

The nine days' trial came to an end, and there was a sigh of relief all over Scotland when the lovely Madeleine walked out of the dock a free woman. She kept her nerve to the last, but the tension had been great. She smiled as she walked downstairs, and, nodding her head complacently, said, "Well, they won't catch me with arsenic again." I would add that, wonderful as the speech for the defence was, it was thought by many present in court that the Lord Advocate's speech for the prosecution was, as a forensic effort, even superior.

IV

SHOWS HOW DOCTORS DO NOT ALWAYS AGREE, AND
HOW CERTAIN PILLS DISAGREED WITH ME

MY father had suffered severely from eczema, and was recommended by Sir James Simpson to go to Buxton.

“No,” said the Professor, correcting himself, “Buxton is not the place for you. Go to Harrogate, and tell Dr. Blank I sent you. He is a first-rate fellow, and will cure you, if anyone can.”

And to Harrogate my father betook himself. In three months he had returned without a trace of that most irritating disease, and loud in praise of the doctor.

“What he did for me,” he said, “he will do for you.” And as soon as I was strong enough, after my attack of diphtheria, I followed his advice, travelled to Harrogate, and took up my abode in the Queen Hotel, at that time as comfortable a house as one could wish. The doctor proved to be all my father had described him. Skilful in his profession, generous to a fault, capital company, but under excitement very outspoken, not to say

SHOWS HOW DOCTORS DISAGREE

profane. If Kingsley did not draw Tom Thurnall from that Harrogate Scotchman, he might have done so.

Although the doctor believed in "the waters," and prescribed them for his patients who had lived "not wisely, but too well," he did not think them a sovereign remedy for all the ills that flesh is heir to, or that everyone that came to consult him should do penance at seven o'clock on a winter's morning, and walk about drinking tumbler after tumbler of stinking stuff to the tune of the "Wacht am Rhein," infamously played by a pack of shivering devils from the Fatherland. So little did he think it in my case, that when I asked him if it was time for me to begin "the waters," "Damn the waters!" he ejaculated; "you're weak enough without them."

I was certainly as weak as a kitten, and thoroughly unnerved. To receive sentence of death from an eminent medical man is not calculated to raise one's spirits, and before leaving Edinburgh Dr. Warburton Begbie had passed that sentence on me. He said I was suffering from Bright's disease. Dr. Blank said I was not, and often did I wonder who would prove to be right. There was some complication or other, but no one could long be dull in the doctor's company, and, Bright or no Bright, I began to get stronger. Besides his patients in the town, whom he drenched with the "old sulphur," or some other tap equally

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filthy, the doctor had a large country practice, necessitating his keeping four horses. They were all good hacks, and all went in harness, and many a ride and drive we had together over that most sporting country hunted by the "Bramham Moor."

"I haven't quite fathomed your case yet," he said one Saturday evening as we were driving home from the pretty little village of Harewood. "Will you take anything I prescribe for you? I think I know something that will do you good."

"Certainly I will," I replied.

"Very well; this has been a hard week, and I must have a rest to-morrow. I am not going from home all day." His house was within a hundred yards of the hotel. "I'll tell Copeland"—then the best-known chemist in the place—"to send you some pills. Don't take them to-night, remember; take two to-morrow morning at eight o'clock, and come round and let me have a look at you at half-past. I am not going from home."

All this, especially the repeated assurance that he was not going from home, rather puzzled me. The pills arrived—monstrous big ones they were—and at eight next morning, according to orders, I swallowed two.

Palmer, Pritchard, and, in more recent times, Lamson and other adepts in the art of poisoning, knew how to administer a dose—knew well that to give too much was sometimes as fatal a mistake as to give too little. But to resume.

SOME PILLS DISAGREED WITH ME

Having swallowed the pills, I walked along to the doctor's. His front-door always stood open. I knew the way to the consulting-room, knocked, and entered. Jumping up, he drew me forward to the window and looked at me earnestly.

"How do you feel?" he asked.

"Well," I replied, "I feel rather queer. More as if it was after dinner than before breakfast."

"If Copeland is right," was his answer, "you'll be dead about two."

"I hope he's not right," I said, with rather a sinking heart.

"Never mind Copeland," said the doctor cheerily; "I have some letters to write. Go and have your breakfast, and come back in an hour."

Reaching the hotel with difficulty, for I was getting rapidly worse, I sat down in the writing-room and tried to convince myself that it was simply funk, but it wouldn't do. Staggering to my feet, and reeling about like a man hopelessly drunk, I got out of the hotel—the writing-room was luckily on the ground-floor—and made for the doctor's again. I don't know how I got there, but I honestly believe that the last hundred yards of the Marathon Race was no stiffer job for the Italian baker than that hundred yards was for me, and my effort was absolutely "on the square." I had no men to hold me up or cheer me on.

Opening the consulting-room door again, I fell down "all of a heap" on the sofa, and before the

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doctor could get to me began to be sick. I soon brought up everything I had taken, but continued to vomit, or, at any rate, to retch, till well on in the afternoon. How I did not burst every blood-vessel in my body beats me. I was much too far gone then to feel any fear, but as I got better I asked if the danger was over.

“Yes,” the doctor said; “we’ll get you to bed presently. You’ll sleep to-night, I warrant.”

I was shivering with cold; but some soup, a glass of brandy, and a hot-water bottle to my feet, soon put me right, and I slept till morning.

“Well,” I said, when the doctor appeared, “you ought to be hanged, there’s no doubt about that. What made you attempt my life in this cold-blooded manner?”

If I had died, it would have been awkward for me, and nearly as awkward for him, for the chemist, on the receipt of the prescription, had actually called in person to remonstrate.

“All’s well that ends well,” but that I was very nearly across the river that time does not admit of doubt, seeing that one-eighth of the original prescription was my next dose—a dose that affected me quite as much as I thought it should do.

The story seems incredible, but facts are “stronger than friction,” as a schoolboy of my acquaintance observed; and though he hadn’t got the proverb exactly as it should be, it does not alter the truth of it.

SOME PILLS DISAGREED WITH ME

I drew from the doctor afterwards that to be corrected by a "damned apothecary" would have been worse than murder!

This episode, one would think, was enough to estrange us professionally and socially, but such was not the result. I knew his worth and his regard for me, and many years afterwards, having contracted blood-poisoning in a city police-station, I again went to Harrogate to consult him, and we remained firm friends to the day of his death.

V

OF GOLF AND THE EDITOR

WE have it on the authority of Lord Wemyss that James I. introduced the game of golf south of the Tweed to civilize the savages he had annexed. To write a book in this year of grace without alluding to the pastime would stamp the author as a man devoid of discretion.

Two years ago I was invited to stay at a house in the county of many acres. As I emerged from the motor, I handed my gun, my rod, and various other articles to a footman, who received them with a smile, and deposited them in the hall. As I was taking off my greatcoat, I noticed him busily engaged in groping about the car. He tried inside and he tried outside, turned up the front seat and the back, cross-examined the chauffeur, and then, with a look of disgust, said: "They must have left your clubs at the station, sir." "Left what?" "Your clubs, sir." I told him that I had none, that I had given up the game. He smiled incredulously, and I had to tell him again. Now, it is a great matter to be famous for something,

OF GOLF AND THE EDITOR

and if I am famous for nothing else, the fact that I have played golf and given it up should go a long way to make me so. I was not always in such an unregenerate state. In days gone by I was very keen, and golf it was that made John Blackwood and myself acquainted. He was then living at Strathtyrum—to the golfer simply a paradise—and to Strathtyrum one lovely September I was invited. We played the game all day and every day, bar Sunday. (Everyone knows what “Old Tom” said when asked his opinion as to Sunday golfing: “If the gowfers had nae need of a rest, the links had.”) But “the Editor,” though he did his two rounds per diem, did a lot of work besides; he was never idle. Strathtyrum, in fact, was 45, George Street minus the old pictures but plus the golf. One day I have reason to remember. I lost two half-crowns to Whyte-Melville, then over eighty years of age, and was asked to write an article for “the magazine.” “You must write something for me,” “the Editor” said, as we were making by the short-cut for Strathtyrum Avenue. I told him I had never written in my life, and that the days of “Maga” were numbered should anything from my illiterate and ungrammatical pen appear in its pages, but he was obdurate. “What are you principally interested in now?” he said. “Deer-stalking,” I replied, without hesitation. “On leaving you I am making for Loch Maree.” “Capital!” said “the Editor”; “couldn’t be better.

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

Now, let me have an article on that sport in three months' time." He had the article, entitled "Reminiscences of a Ross-shire Forest," within the time, and, to my great delight, it was accepted.

I knew all the stories in "Old Ebony"—especially Aytoun's—off by heart. "Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat," and possibly Mr. Blackwood thought that, with such a constant perusal of good writing, I might have imbibed a little of the art of writing myself.

Mr. Blackwood's sense of humour was only equalled by his kindness of heart. To consign a contribution to the waste-paper basket gave him pain. To encourage and advise a young and struggling author was to him a far more congenial task.

Mr. Blackwood and Aytoun, needless to say, spent much of their time together. On one occasion, when staying at Coblenz, they encountered a swaggering and very alcoholic fellow-countryman. "The Surveyor's Tale," "the Editor" told me, was the outcome of that meeting.

Mr. Blackwood's death, to my great regret, occurred within two years of my making his acquaintance.

VI

RACING, HUNTING, SHOOTING, AND DEER-STALKING

THE Cæsarwitch of 1866 was won by a horse—or pony, I should say, for he only stood 15·3—called Lecturer. He had been very judiciously handled, to put it mildly, and had only 7 stone 3 pounds to carry. A fortnight before the race I dined at the Gridiron, in Grafton Street, Bond Street, my host being a subaltern in the Guards, who eventually rose to command the regiment and the Home District; the only other guest present being Peter Wilkinson, the son, I believe, of a Yorkshire parson, an intimate friend, or hanger-on, I should say, of the Marquess of Hastings, then in the zenith of his fame, poor boy! and a supporter of racing, rat-pitting, cock-fighting, and every other species of abomination then denominated “sport.”

Peter’s appearance was against him, and every word he uttered made me wonder to see him in such company; but subalterns always were subalterns, and always will be. He reminded me of Mr. Cairngey Thornton, “premier toady” to Mr. Waffles, when he “didn’t put on steam”

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

enough at the brook, but “knew the improvidence of quarrelling with his bread and butter.” Major Barlow of Hasketon, Woodbridge—a marvellous judge of a horse—who used to buy largely for the late Duke of Westminster, although admitting reluctantly that Peter could ride, agreed with me as to his sponging and toadying character. “Why,” he said to me one day, “the beggar used to fall off on purpose. When he saw that Hastings was getting sick of him, he would take the opportunity, when hounds were running, of choosing a soft place or a parsley-and-butter-like duck-pond, and off he would fall or in he would go.” At dinner, after the port had circulated once or twice, Peter, looking very subdued, would ask the butler when the early train left. “What’s that you’re talking about, Peter?” Hastings would exclaim. “You’re not going to leave me? Damn it all, that won’t do! We must have another day like this. Haven’t had such fun for ages.” And Peter’s “voluntary” secured him another three weeks or a month.

The Gridiron was the first club of its sort in London. The fare was supposed to be as frugal as that of the “holy clerk of Copmanhurst,” but when favoured guests appeared, such as “Sir Sluggish Knight,” the larder was equal to the occasion, and Peter and I fared right sumptuously. We talked racing, and racing only, and as the “Geisler” circulated Peter became loquacious, and informed us confidentially that “the stable” stood to win

RACING

£80,000 or £90,000 over Lecturer. Parting from this estimable individual without a pang, I took ship next day for the Queen Hotel, Harrogate. The billiard-room at the Queen was as nice as you see in any private house, the marker in attendance being one of the celebrated Bennet family—a beautiful player, but not within hail of his brother Joseph. He was a wretched, pasty-faced little beggar, spending all his time—it must be admitted, of necessity—in a vitiated gas-light existence, seldom getting one breath of fresh air, and devoting all his leisure—when he had any—to reading *Bell's Life* and studying the “state of the odds.” I soon found out he had a “certainty” for the race, and that he had invested all he was worth, and a good deal more, on the animal, and was advising all his clients—stock-brokers and others from Leeds—to do likewise. Remembering the night at the Gridiron, and longing to attain to celebrity as a tipster of the first class, I told him he had got hold of the wrong end of the story—that the race was as good as over, that there was only one horse in it, and that horse was Lecturer.

“Lecturer!” he said contemptuously. “Never ’eard of him; he’s not in the bettin’ at all. Oh yes, here he is—sixty-six to one agin him. And he’ll win, you think?”

“Of course he will,” I made reply.

At last the eventful day came to make or mar Master Bennet. There were a good many men in

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the billiard-room when his telegram arrived. Before he could open it I exclaimed: "Lecturer first, you will see." And Lecturer it was. The wretched youth was completely knocked out of time; he hadn't even a curse left in him.

"Now," I said, "what have I been doing for ten days but showing you how to make your fortune, and you wouldn't do it!"

"Well," he replied, "I can't deny it, and that's the fact; but I never knew you was standin' in with the stable like that. What a pot o' money you must have collared!"

Reputations are often made in similar fashion, by nothing else—confining ourselves still to the vernacular—than a ghastly fluke.

Reverting to the Gridiron, there were many clubs started afterwards on the lines of the original establishment in Grafton Street, notably one in King Street, St. James's, "to supply a recognized want in the West End," as the spirited proprietor, Bob Hope Johnstone, *alias* Savage, poetically put it; but the want was not recognized, and Robert and his Gridiron collapsed like a balloon at the Alexandra Park.

The year after the billiard-room episode I was travelling south in a carriage by myself two or three days before Doncaster Races. At Thirsk Station a railway inspector, catching sight of me, advanced to the window, touching his hat. "Glad to see you looking so well, my lord." (Who the lord

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was for whom he took me, goodness knows.) Then, sinking his voice to a whisper: "Will he win, my lord?"—the Leger, presumably. I was a good deal amused, but, rising to the occasion, gravely replied, in an equally low tone: "Can't see what's to beat him."

"Thank you, my lord," said the inspector; "I'm very much obliged to your lordship," and, saluting again, departed.

Now, if that man put his "bottom dollar" on that horse, and shortly thereafter found himself in the streets with the ten thousand men who didn't know when to lead trumps, was I bound in honour to support his wife and family?

I have had many "certainties" given to me, notably one by the late Charlie Perkins, but never was fool enough to act on them or to risk money that I could not afford to lose. I was always, and am still, desperately keen on racing, and even in my business days seldom missed the Brighton Meeting. To stay at the Norfolk, with dear old Creighton to take care of you, to drive up daily to the course, to return to the comfort of that most admirable of all hotels—what more could man want?

Hunting is "the sport of Kings"—I am quite with Mr. Jorrocks so far—but I confess I like a safe conveyance, and safe *landing*, such as you get with the Tyndale in Northumberland or the North Cheshire. To gallop over a grouse-moor with bogs, boulders, and rabbit-holes may suit some people;

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it doesn't suit me. To gallop over the asphalt in the streets of the City on Lord Mayor's Day is enjoyable in comparison. Then, again, the sport of Kings is for the rich. Personally, I cannot complain, for my friends have been good to me, and many a grand day have I had from Bywell, Stamfordham, or Heddon-on-the-Wall with the Tyndale, or from Ridley Toll Bar, Tarporley Town End, or Wrenbury with the Cheshire.

Do you know Cheshire, gentle reader, the country of cheese as well as foxes—how the squires have their cheese cooked, and what you are expected to do with it when it is cooked? No? Then I will tell you. Towards the conclusion of dinner a brazier, filled in the kitchen with cheese cut into slabs, is brought in and deposited on the sideboard, the vessel being heated to concert pitch, quite as hot, though not as large, as that over which Front-de-Bœuf proposed cooking Isaac of York; a jug of excellent ale is also placed ready to hand. The butler, as the cheese is simmering, pours on the ale, and, if he is Cheshire-born, the seething mass is ready for you exactly when you are ready for it. All this reads appetizing—nothing could be nicer; but then comes the tug-of-war. To every ounce of cheese, handed round with lightning speed, is added a claret-glassful, or tumblerful—the quantity depends on the squire—of the hot ale in which the cheese has been cooked, and that you are expected to drink. Even at the risk of giving

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offence, I always drew the line at the beverage, which required a Cheshire stomach to cope with.

Shooting I was always very keen upon, and in my young days could hold my own with most men. I never shot much in Cheshire. There were lots of pheasants reared near where I used to stay, but the gorses were so thick that you couldn't force your way through them. Baddeley was bad enough, but the historic Calveley Gorse was ten times worse, and you were always enjoined not to shoot birds that might fall into it, for no retriever or spaniel could recover them for you. One day—it was in '74—will never be effaced from my memory. We were in pursuit of partridges—three of us. “Some braggarts aver that those birds have been shot on the wing.”* Evidently our forefathers found them as hard to hit as my two friends did. There is little or no grain in that part of the country, and the birds are dark in colour, and miserably small; hence, perhaps, the difficulty my fellow-sportsmen found in hitting them. Both were excellent hands at “letting it off,” as Mr. Tupman said, for every bird that got up in front of them, and every four-footed animal that ran past them, was—I cannot say the recipient of four barrels—but certainly had four barrels let off in the endeavour to stop him. The bag at the end of the day was five and a half brace of partridges and nine hares,

* This I found in a very old book on sport, the name of which I have forgotten.

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and of that lot I killed five and a half brace of partridges and eight hares. The four barrels may have had something to do with the death of the other hare, but I scarcely think it likely. "Died by the visitation of God" would have been the verdict had a jury been impanelled to sit on his carcass.

I should explain that my friends were hunting-men pure and simple; they didn't pretend to shoot, and were as much amused as I was to see the birds of the air and beasts of the field emerge scatheless from their "baptism of fire."

Occasionally one reads in that most excellent paper, the *Field*, accounts of a day's sport—"With a Swivel-gun on the Suffolk Coast," "A Record Day on December 10th," etc., the title being as unsensational—if there is such a word—as the article itself. Many such accounts I have come across, not as exciting, perhaps, as "The Man-eater's Last Meal," or "A Cobra among the Blankets," but, to my mind, pleasanter reading it would be difficult to find. One day's grouse-shooting in Ross-shire will not, I hope, weary my readers—a day with a grand beginning but an unfortunate ending. My first acquaintance with Highland grouse was on August 12, more than thirty years ago, on the shores of that most beautiful of all lochs, Loch Maree; and having been accustomed, from my boyhood, to birds rising often at 60, 80, or 100 yards in the counties of Dumfries,

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Roxburgh, and Northumberland, their ways were to me passing strange. Not only would they lie to the dog, but you would see them running about in the heather within 15 yards of you. They fairly put me off my shooting. But the day we are now concerned with was not in August, nor yet in September ; it was in the end of October—the 25th, the last day of the season before leaving for the South. Then, though grouse still lie to the dog, you must be quick on them if you are to fill your bag.

Imagine a lovely clear morning, with just a sprinkling of snow. A breakfast such as you could have seen nowhere but in Scotland—beginning with porridge and ending with “Keiller”—enables you to face a drive in an open dogcart with equanimity. The road is as good as you could wish, but terminates abruptly in three miles, when you transfer yourself to the back of a Highland pony, as surefooted as a chamois. Lucky for you that he is so, for the track is narrow, risky, and in some places positively dangerous. Four and a half miles that track is ; but your troubles are over at last : the shepherd’s hut is reached ; and there you find the three head-stalkers, with four gillies and six setters. Donald Ross, the senior, formerly with Horatio of that ilk, and as good a man, either with rifle or gun, as I ever met, as soon as I rode up, lost no time.

“Duncan and I, sir,” he said, “will take the high

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ground ; you will have a better chance by the loch-side."

An Ayrshire farmer in Galston parish, who never missed seeing his men "yoke" summer or winter, used to say he "liket a drop o' whusky at any time, but especially in the mornin', for he got the gude o' it a' day." A little drop cements friendship, and Donald and I wished each other "good luck" in the usual way ; but before parting, he enjoined me to be back at four o'clock to the minute, as riding down the path in the dark was not to be recommended. By this time the day was perfect—bright sunshine, and as warm as summer. There was just enough wind for the dogs, but, unfortunately, it was blowing the wrong way—from us, not to us. We held a hurried council of war, and decided it was far better to make for the extremity of the ground at once, and shoot homewards. My beat was very narrow, and about three miles long, but more perfect heather I never saw. I was keen to begin, and almost thought I might hold my own with the two stalkers, seeing how much better the low ground was than the high so late in the season.

"We must make the best of our way going, Rory," I said. "Take the dogs up ; I won't fire a shot till we turn." It was just eleven o'clock when I killed my first grouse. Rory worked all three dogs at once, and more beautiful work I never saw. The birds were, for Ross-shire, very wild, seldom

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rising within thirty yards of you ; but I was shooting well, and few birds escaped that gave me a chance.

“ Ten minutes for lunch, Rory,” I said—“ not one second more ;” and down we sat about 1.30. At 3.45 we got to the burn, within 200 yards of the shepherd’s hut, and descried Donald and Duncan, having stopped shooting, coming down the hill at their best pace. Having a quarter of an hour to spare, I told the gillies to empty the bags and count what we had got.

“ Not very much,” I said to myself, “ but I think it will do ;” and, leaving the men to pack up the spoil again, I jumped down into the bed of the burn to look for a place to cross dry-shod. The drop could not have been more than five feet, but, jumping carelessly, and lighting upon hard rock, I broke my leg—the small bone only ; but, under the circumstances, that was bad enough. Seeing something had happened—for Rory had a hold of me in a moment—Donald made for me at top speed. He told me afterwards he thought I had taken a fit, and was relieved to see me merely looking somewhat disconsolate.

“ What’s wrong, sir ?” he called out.

“ What have you got ?” was my reply.

“ Twenty brace, sir,” he answered. “ And you, sir ?”

“ Fifteen.”

“ You have done well, sir,” was his comment.

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Now five-and-thirty brace to three guns may be looked upon by sportsmen of the present day as too insignificant to put on record. I have myself on many occasions assisted in making a very much larger bag; but, considering the shooting—the men assured me that they had accounted for nearly every bird within shot of them—the limited time at our disposal, the perfect working of the dogs, the glorious sky and the matchless scenery, I look back on that 25th of October as the very red-letter day of my long shooting life.

I have heard men inveigh against grouse-shooters who spend weeks in Scotland when they might be more profitably employed elsewhere. Grouse-shooting, in pure Highland air, amidst beautiful scenery, has saved many an overworked man, my humble self included, from absolute collapse. Even the scoffers, who refuse to shoot grouse, seldom or never refuse to eat them. I have seen invalids, who would turn from almost any other food, eat grouse for days together. A blackcock is all well enough, but, in the opinion of most experts, not for one moment comparable in flavour to the grouse; in fact, I once heard an old Border farmer describe the latter species as “nesty teuch birrds, fit for naething but to send to your freens in England.”

But how about the broken leg? Well, that gave me a deal of trouble. The pony was brought down to the burn, and I was carefully lifted on. Shivering as I was, for the evening was already

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getting cold, I could scarcely divert my eyes from the marvellous sunset to the cup filled to the brim with neat whisky, held up to me by Donald. Thankful I was to get it, and even Carrie Nation, had she been on the spot, would have had some difficulty in dashing the cup of comfort from my lips.

Donald and Duncan attended to me themselves—no better men could I have had in broad Scotland—the former leading the pony, the latter keeping an eye on me; and I think I rode down the path, crippled though I was, in less time than I had ridden up.

My leg was much swollen next day, and all thoughts of travelling South had to be abandoned. I did not get to Northumberland till November 10, and for weeks thereafter I was unable to walk.

Henry Trotter—Major-General Sir Henry, of Morton Hall, near Edinburgh, who died about three years ago—a first-rate all-round sportsman, a racket player and cricketer second to none (in his old age), a good fisherman, a good man over a country, and a most brilliant shot, either at Shepherd's Bush or on the Pentlands, had a thorough contempt for deer-stalking, because, as he explained to me when we had a long argument on the subject, everything was done for you. "And besides," he added, "there's no difficulty in getting up to your stag, or, if you are a good shot, in killing him." He told me he had stood

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two days of the orthodox style, being handed over by his host to a stalker and three gillies, and that that was enough. He started early, came home late, "clean" both days as a Dundee whaler after an unfortunate season. On the third he asked if he might go out himself, entirely unattended, and "I was back in three hours, having killed one of the best stags in the forest." Such luck may happen to anyone, but it is luck, and luck only. To kill deer unassisted, you must know—I had almost said every rock in the forest and every corrie they frequent; and unless you have spent many and many a month gaining your knowledge and studying the eddies, which blow one moment in your face and the next, without rhyme or reason, on your back, you will make poor work of it.

I have described a day's grouse-shooting, when I missed nothing, and to which, notwithstanding its disastrous termination, I still look back with unalloyed satisfaction. I will now describe a day's stalking, when I shot infamously, missed a stag right and left at the very "darkening," and, with more luck than I deserved, got him after all. The beast was on the low ground, near the Loch Maree Hotel. We did not expect to find deer there, Duncan Fraser and I, and were walking along carelessly when we came on him and his harem. We anticipated half an hour's walk before it was worth while to "look" the hill, when suddenly we heard the bark of a hind within twenty yards of us,

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and away went her lord and master. I had just time to see what a wonderful head he had before I could get the rifle out of its cover. The herd could not have got our "wind," and trotted off very leisurely.

Following now with the utmost care, we descried them again in a quarter of an hour, but the stag was unapproachable; I never saw more watchful hinds. After lying in a damp hole—the only safe place we could find—till two o'clock, we tried to get round the herd and come down on the stag from above, but the wind was catchy.

"Too risky, sir," said Duncan; and, cold and stiff, we crawled back to our damp hole again. What makes one impervious to cold under such surroundings? Is it the fresh air, or the Glenlivet, or a blend of both? Though chilled to the bone hundreds of times grouse-driving and deer-stalking, I have never once been a "preen the waur," while one open window and a stuffy room in Pall Mall have on more than one occasion nearly finished me. Anyway, about four o'clock the stag got on his legs and lazily stretched himself, the hinds closing in and looking admiringly at him.

"If they feed down the hill, sir," said Duncan, "we'll get him." They did feed down the hill, but very, very slowly, and it was not till five o'clock that the time for action arrived. The stag was now in a little gully with almost perpendicular sides—say twelve or fourteen yards high; the wind was

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all right, and we crawled forward till we could peer over and see him and his wives immediately below us. Imagine the situation. It was October 10—the last day of the season—and we had not a quarter of an hour's daylight to come and go on. Duncan, though the hero of a hundred fights, was positively shivering with excitement, for, as he told me afterwards, he had seen the stag twice previously, and knew every point in his head. We were within thirty yards of him—too close—and, near though he was, I feared I should miss him ; but there was little time for thinking over it. Taking another bullet from the case, I laid it ready to hand on a flat stone to my left ; then, getting into as good a position as I could, I fired, and missed him right and left, both shots going apparently within an inch of his back. A couple of seconds he stood, thunder-struck at the noise so near him. Picking up the bullet, I had just time to insert it in the right barrel and close the breech ; and as he was scrambling up the opposite side of the gulley, I put in the third shot behind the shoulder, and down he rolled again to the bottom, stone-dead. The head had only ten points, but it was beautifully symmetrical, the brow antlers in particular being quite perfect. I have shot a good many deer in my day, but never had a more exciting experience than on that 10th of October.

The ground on which I stalked this stag—or shot him, rather ; there was no stalking in it—was

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beautiful pasturage, carrying a stock both of sheep and cattle—luckily we circumvented them without difficulty—and there are thousands of acres about Loch Maree where sheep are literally and metaphorically “in clover”; but seven- or eight-tenths, I think I may say, of the Gairloch Forest and of most Highland forests are barren wastes, where deer only can exist, and even deer, hardy though they be, are compelled during a long, severe winter to make for the low ground to escape starvation. The “monarch of the glen” in summer or autumn holds no communication with the human race: man he distrusts; he lives on the “heights,” and keeps himself to himself; but when his stronghold is ice-bound, and the whole face of Nature as hard as adamant, he acknowledges defeat, comes down and thrusts his lovely head over the keeper’s garden fence, waiting as patiently for a mouthful of hay as the recipients of the “General’s” bounty wait at the shelter for a basin of soup.

Thirty years ago a vigorous effort was made on behalf of the poor Highlander, compelled to emigrate when he wanted to stay at home, and from that day to this there has been the same outcry against Highland lairds who “forest” their estates, and prevent their dependants, whose welfare should be their first consideration, from making a living. Highland lairds understand their own country; they know perfectly well that sheep cannot exist where deer would starve; that up to a certain

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altitude oats or turnips will grow ; that above that altitude they will not ; and that in cultivating grouse and deer, and letting their lodges to the rich Sassenach or American millionaire, they not only benefit themselves, but add to the comfort and happiness of their people. They see, when they go into Inverness, the train from the South arrive, and men stepping out on the platform with well-lined pockets ; they see their old friends Snowie and McLean, on the look-out, like George Barnwell, “ a customer hoping to find, sir ” ; they see a parallel to Stornham Court village and gardens before Bettina took them in hand, and they are content.

All this the Radical member cannot see, or says he cannot. He wants “ access to mountains,” and the whole “ infamous system ” done away with. Some day, let us hope, the scales will fall from his eyes ; meantime, let me tell him, it will be a black day for the Highlands of Scotland when deer-stalking is disestablished.

Travelling from Northumberland to Achnasheen, the station for Kinlochewe and Lochmaree, took much longer time thirty years ago than it does now. Trains did not fit in as well, and we sometimes broke the journey and stayed a night at Perth. The best hotel in the “ fair city ” in those days was Pople’s, and there, one evening in August, four of us, in exuberant spirits—for we had all the season before us—sat down to dinner. The house

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was full—not one room was vacant—and the waiter, evidently newly caught, had a lively time of it. He was terribly overworked, poor devil! but thinking, no doubt, that gentlemen who had engaged a private sitting-room might show their appreciation of his services in a substantial manner, he gave us all the attention he could, evoking some forcible language from the denizens of the coffee-room downstairs.

Notwithstanding the exertions of the friendly garçon, we should have fared badly had we not put our own shoulders to the wheel, and, being a useful man with a corkscrew, I was unanimously elected to open the champagne. As soon as the first cork was extracted, “Pull the bell,” I exclaimed, “or we shall all be poisoned.” (I remember, by the way, this very request being made, in rather a peremptory manner, by a cheeky young subaltern to the famous war-correspondent of the *Times* at Shepherd’s Hotel, Cairo. “Pull the bell, Russell.” “If I pull anything,” old Russell replied, looking the young gentleman very straight in the face—“if I pull anything, it will be your damned long nose!”) But my request, being couched in a more courteous tone, was complied with, and the waiter appeared. “Take this bottle away at once,” I said, “and fetch another; it’s corked.” “A’ the champagne i’ the hoose is corked,” was the answer; but we got another bottle, and, if I recollect rightly, two or three more followed.

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When dinner was drawing to a close, the Knight of the Napkin appeared again with a few fragments of Stilton on a plate. "Ah'm sorry," he said apologetically, "Ah couldna get ye the joint o' cheese ; she's engaged."

VII

MY LIFE IN THE SUFFOLK ARTILLERY MILITIA, AND AFTER

How I, totally unacquainted with the county, found myself a full-blown subaltern in that crack corps would take too long to tell: suffice it to say that one very cold and rainy night, in the year '69, I found myself in a bell-tent, the canvas of which was no thicker than one's shirt-tail, in a pestilential swamp not far from the quaint old town of Harwich. The tents, it was afterwards discovered, had been condemned, and the site for our camp had been chosen with such skill and forethought that the surgeon of the brigade, an old-fashioned but most skilful practitioner, entered a protest then and there, and before we had unpacked our kits, or discovered in what particular box the stimulants had been stored, his protest was given effect to. Tents were struck, and off we marched to take fresh ground on the slope surrounding Harwich Redoubt. Our Commanding Officer was Sir Shafto Adair, a devoted friend and admirer of the Grand Old Man, who spent a fortune in electioneering,

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and was eventually rewarded with a peerage, that of Waveney. Personally he was liked by everyone; but the Suffolk potentates could not swallow his politics, and so difficult did he find it to get officers in the county that he was ready to accept anyone who would take a commission. Except the major, we were all aliens together, and, if the right men, we were in the wrong place, for none of us could speak the language of the district. The non-commissioned officers, however, without exception had been born and bred in the neighbourhood, and no interpreter was required as far as they were concerned. The gunners, mostly agricultural labourers or fishermen from the coast, required very little to lick them into shape, always good-humoured, cheerful, and patient; and sorely was their patience tried that year I joined. For the first week the weather was ideal. Everyone revelled in the sunshine. Little did we anticipate what was coming. Rain for twenty-four hours a day without intermission, diversified with showers of snow and sleet, made the place a perfect quagmire. Smallpox broke out, the men were confined to camp, and had nothing to do from morning until night but stand in their sodden greatcoats "glowerin' frae them," and listen to the strains of the "Dead March in Saul," which the band practised for hours together. We had only three deaths after all, and would have come through undefeated; the weather it was that beat us.

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Next training, when we were as short of officers as ever, another alien appeared in the person of John D. P. French, destined eventually to make a name for himself as a cavalry leader, second to none since the days of Ney and Murat. He soon left the plains of Harwich for other fields of action, and the next time we met was on the Victoria Embankment, on the occasion of the German Emperor's visit to the Guildhall in the year '90, when he was sent by the Adjutant-General to command the cavalry in the City, and was of great service to me in bringing a trying day to a successful termination.

Before going further, I must explain that there are two police forces in the Metropolis, and that, strangely enough, many people, both east and west of Temple Bar, are unaware of the fact.

The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police is directly responsible to the Home Secretary for the due discharge of his duties. The force is, in fact, commanded from the Home Office, not from Scotland Yard.

The City Commissioner, on the other hand, is quite an autocrat in a small way. He chooses "fit and able men" who "shall obey all such lawful commands as they may from time to time receive from the said Commissioner." As long as he does not contravene the provisions of the Act, he can handle the force as he likes, promote men, reduce them, punish or dismiss them as he sees fit. He is appointed to administer the Act of Parliament, and

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were he to allow interference in filling the ranks of the force, or in making arrangements for the safety of the public, he would undoubtedly infringe its provisions, and render himself liable to dismissal. Keeping all this in view, it has always appeared to me extraordinary how little friction there is between the Commissioner and the Police Committee. As far as I was concerned, I was uniformly treated by them with kindness and consideration, and, though we differed on many occasions, we always ended harmoniously, and sooner or later came to the same conclusion; but "man proposes," and occasionally, notwithstanding their efforts and mine, things would go wrong.

On the occasion of the German Emperor's visit to the Guildhall, the Reception Committee had an enormous amount of work to get through, and they continued their deliberations long after I had left them and returned to my office; but should they pass any resolution in my absence, the Town Clerk was instructed always to send a note over to me, apprising me of what had taken place. That day, however, through no lack of care or courtesy on their part, I had no intimation from the Town Clerk's office of the hours fixed by the Committee for the Emperor's departure from Buckingham Palace and arrival at the Guildhall, and was terribly put about when the usual posters were brought to my notice fixing the hour of departure from the Palace for 12 noon, and the

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time of arrival at the Guildhall for 1 p.m. The pace at which the vehicle travels can best be described by likening it to the "hound's jog" to covert, and seldom exceeds six miles an hour. At such a pace the drive from Buckingham Palace to the Guildhall takes exactly thirty minutes. Should the weather be favourable, the carriage in which the hero of the day passes through the streets is open; the people wish to see him, and he is uniformly good enough to give them the opportunity.

I instantly went across to Sir John Monckton, the Town Clerk, who, in reply to my remonstrance, said: "It can't be helped now: everything will go right, never fear." "It must be helped," I said to myself, and, jumping into a hansom, I drove straight to Grosvenor Square, where I was fortunate enough to find at home a noble Duke, then Master of the Horse.

I put the case fairly before him, and told him that if the Emperor left Buckingham Palace at twelve o'clock, he would arrive half an hour too soon; that carriages of invited guests conveying royalties and Ambassadors from foreign Courts, and hansom and four-wheelers conveying guests of lower degree, all intending to be there in time to receive him, would block the way and impede his progress. I did not bring all my guns into action at once—a fatal mistake—but, irrespective of all this, kept something in reserve, which the Duke, I

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knew, was bound to recognize. To halt the royal carriage for half an hour in the streets of the City, overlooked by windows crowded with all nationalities, was, I explained to him, to court disaster. I had information from abroad which it was neither my inclination nor my duty to divulge, and I merely told him I declined all responsibility whatever for the Emperor's safety unless the programme, as regarded the time-table, was amended to my satisfaction. Nobody could have been kinder or more business-like than the Master of the Horse. Not an hour after I left him he went down and submitted my representations to Queen Victoria and her grandson.

The eventful morning arrived, and everything went well. The Emperor, gratified beyond measure at the warmth of his reception on the route, came and left in the best of spirits. Next day nearly every newspaper in London was down on him for his unpunctuality. Only two men knew that he left to the minute as privately arranged, and met most willingly and cheerfully every suggestion put before him. I would add that he presented both Sir Edward Bradford and myself with very valuable souvenirs of his visit.

Even with Colonel French ready and willing to carry out any suggestion I made, the day did not go altogether smoothly. Having placed in position every cavalry regiment allotted to the City but his own, we rode down to Blackfriars Bridge, to find a heavy cavalry regiment already drawn up on the

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ground intended for the 19th Hussars. After all, it did not very much matter. We easily placed the 19th Hussars elsewhere, but, had we been on the veldt, with Cronje and company in front, instead of in the "one square mile," the result, in all human probability, would not have been so satisfactory.

Harwich I have described as a quaint old town ; it might also be described as the very worst part of the Suffolk coast for the training of a militia regiment. It was, however, from its being a half-way-house between London and Flixton (Lord Waveney's seat, near Bungay), the place of all others he preferred—hence our being sent there. When a battery had to cross one of the estuaries for practice—an event of nearly every-day occurrence—the gunners used to turn up their trousers to the knee, or take them off altogether, and carry the officers on their backs through the shoal-water to the boats. I recollect Sir Evelyn Wood, when in command of the Eastern District, coming over from Colchester one day accompanied by his A.D.C., that most popular of all officers, Ronald Bertram Lane, recently Lieutenant-Governor of Chelsea Hospital, and known throughout the service as Rowdy. A battery was embarking in the peculiar manner I have portrayed, and the Adjutant was chafing at the delay, and apologizing to Sir Evelyn for it. "What we want here, sir," he said, "is a good pier." "Why, you've got him," said Rowdy, pointing to Lord Waveney.

VIII

ABOUT DOGS, PRINCIPALLY RETRIEVERS

“PLUS je vois les hommes, plus j’admire les chiens.”
“ This animal,” Robert Louis Stevenson says, “ in many ways so superior, has accepted a position of inferiority, shares the domestic life and humours the caprices of the tyrant.” Yes, he does all that, and more ; and the man who dislikes dogs, and whom dogs dislike, is often forbidding and seldom amiable.

Chelwood Beacon, called “ The Beacon,” is a lovely place in lovely Sussex, standing in a commanding position about fifteen miles to the north of Brighton, and there I have spent many a happy day with Edward Wormald and his wife. Kinder or truer friends I have yet to meet. Wormald and I had, and, I am glad to think, still have, many friends and many tastes in common. Sir Edward Bradford and he were intimate before I knew either. The former, with but one arm—a tiger accounted for the other—is a brilliant shot. So is Wormald ; a better, not even excepting Sir Peniston Milbanke, I never stood beside. But it

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was Thoughtful which first brought Wormald and me together, and cemented that friendship which, I hope, has still some years to run. Thoughtful, that most beautiful of all retrievers—she took many a first prize on the show bench—was given me by Wormald. I mated her with the illustrious Darenth, and laid the foundation of that kennel which for twelve or fourteen years held its own at the Agricultural Hall and in the field. Doubtful, Dryfe, Lennel, Slect, Doubtless, Rival, Falkirk, Scot, Dust, Dalveen, Quentin, Cluden, Renfrew, Kinnel, Muselee, Restless, and Klepper were as near perfection in the field as dogs could be. Some are dead; some I sold; Restless and Klepper alone remain. The latter, called after the Bohemian's pony in "Quentin Durward," was run up to 135 guineas at Aldridge's, but I wanted twice that sum for him, and brought him home. Quentin I sold for 75 guineas; Kinnel for 50 guineas; Falkirk for 45 guineas; Muselee for 42 guineas; and Cluden for 41 guineas; and was offered large sums for several of the others. I sent my keeper, Henry Michie, with Klepper to the Retriever Trials at East Bergholt in 1903, telling him he had only got to go down to Suffolk to win. He went, he saw, but he did not conquer. Keeper and dog returned North with their respective tails very much between their legs, eight dogs having "caught the judge's eye" before Klepper. To question a judge's decision is unpardonable. I

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have never done so, and don't mean to begin now ; but the decision on this occasion was so peculiar, putting it mildly, as to attract attention. The *Scotsman*, in which there was a long and graphic description of the Trials, plumped for the "Scotch dog." The representatives of the most enterprising illustrated papers stopped my keeper as he was making for home, in happy ignorance of his fate, and asked him to stand still and let them "take the winner"; and the *Field*, equally loyal with myself to judges and their decisions, thus delivered itself through Rawdon Lee, whom not to know in the dog world is to argue oneself unknown:

"The decision of the judges came as a surprise ; there were other dogs we should have placed before the winner, notably Sir Henry Smith's Klepper," etc.

From reports furnished to me afterwards, I believe no retriever ever did better work than my dog did that day. He had been accustomed, I ought to explain, only to grouse on the open moor, and it was not till I decided on running him, ten days before the Trials, that I took him to the low ground and shot a few pheasants and partridges over him. He scarcely knew what a hedgerow or a turnip-field was like ; still, when called up by the judge, one would have thought that partridges, and partridges alone, were his particular fancy.

Eight birds were down, three on the near side of an almost unjumpable fence, five on the far side in thick turnips. When told to go by Michie,

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he retrieved first the three, then the five, delivering them right up to hand at a gallop.

To see a dog, head down and tail up, working with great dash and speed after a partridge, running as partridges only can run; to see him casting himself about when the bird has doubled on him, picking up the scent again and following his quarry with unerring precision, is very pretty to look at, and is sure to "bring down the house"; still, no really good dog, when set such a task—unless the scent has been very badly foiled—should have any difficulty in accomplishing it.

When a dog succeeds in getting a runner in the manner I have described, nothing, in the estimation of a discerning public, is too good for him: he has reached the highest pinnacle of excellence to which a retriever can mount. Should he, on the other hand, fail to find a "simply dead bird," he should be relegated to the sausage-machine without a moment's delay. Now, to find the former, as I have endeavoured to show, is easy: to find the latter, bar flukes, an impossibility. The "simply dead bird" seems, like a sitting hen, to have no scent. I have killed grouse, partridges, and pheasants, marked where they fell, and watched the futile efforts of my very best dogs to find them; and thus I am quite ready to admit that Klepper's performance with the eight partridges, though perfect, may have been attended with luck.

Some ten days after Klepper's defeat I was at

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the Edinburgh Dog Show, where I met the senior judge who had officiated at East Bergholt. By senior I mean the judge who dominated the others. I never for one moment meant to allude to his peculiar decision, but as soon as he caught sight of me he advanced, exclaiming :

“ That young dog of yours will be a splendid dog.”

“ He is a fairly good one now,” I replied, “ and I am open to a sporting match if you are. You put eight dogs in front of him at the Trials : now I am ready to run him, not against one of those dogs, but against the whole eight ; and I will bet you a hundred guineas that he finishes the lot in an afternoon, one down, t’other come on.” The bet was not taken.

Two years afterwards, when I was at the Trials myself, I endeavoured again to turn an honest penny, and offered to run one of my young dogs, Quentin, against the winner on that occasion, also for a hundred guineas. Others present were as keen for the match as I was : but discretion is always the better part of valour, and the owner of the animal, a Shropshire potentate of renown, was evidently fully alive to the fact. Having twice thrown down the gauntlet which no one would pick up, I retired—gracefully, let us hope—from field trials.

I still breed a few retrievers, and occasionally send one to the Crystal Palace or the Agricultural Hall ; but the judging at Shows is as peculiar as

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the judging at Trials. There is no uniformity in it. One judge is immensely taken with your exhibit; another passes him by without a look. Independent of all that, I never show a dog, unless I am absolutely certain he has had distemper, without fear and trembling. That dreadful disease plays havoc with dogs like foxhounds and retrievers. Mongrels of low degree will, when attacked, fight with one another, lie in the wet, gnaw bones, bark at motors—and survive. Foxhounds, retrievers, and other “inbred” dogs, on the contrary—70, 80, and 90 per cent. of them—succumb. For distemper, if of a violent type, there is no cure, as every honest huntsman or gamekeeper will tell you. I have seen dogs struck with the disease almost, I may say, instantaneously—quite well and lively, bar a little discharge from the nose and eyes, and two hours afterwards paralyzed, and unable to get on their legs. Should anyone have distemper such as I have had three times in my kennels, I pity him; there is little use fighting against it. Everything that man could try I have tried, including inoculation—that imposture of all impostures—without the slightest effect. It nearly makes me a fatalist. If God wills they should die, that’s an end of it.

In the *St. James’s Gazette* quite recently there have appeared articles on Sport, evidently written by capable men. One writer, and one of the best of them, touches on distemper in dogs, and gives hints as to treatment, and recipes, excellent in

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their way, towards the defeat of the enemy, but not one word does he say of emetics. Now, an emetic is almost the only remedy worth consideration, and of all emetics common table salt is the best, and for this reason: it cannot do the slightest harm. If you notice a dog looking dull, or out of sorts in any way, put a teaspoonful, or larger quantity, depending on the size of the dog, down his throat. It will make him sick, but that won't hurt him. The best veterinary surgeons I have frequently found quite unable to determine whether a dog, evidently ill, was or was not sickening for distemper. If your dog is, the salt will make him bring up from the stomach the poisonous stuff which is always the accompaniment of the disease, and which you can easily detect by the sewer-like smell; if he is not, the salt cannot possibly do him one atom of harm.

Some ten or twelve years ago I wrote "Retrievers, and How to Break Them" (Blackwood). The book, now out of print, was very favourably reviewed in the *Times* and elsewhere, and got the length of three or four editions. I thought it might make my fortune, but it didn't; however, it is now being translated into Russian by a well-known sportsman, Baron Fehliesen, whose knowledge of my mother-tongue is just a little bit superior to my knowledge of his. Man's best friend is subject to another disease—rabies—more terrifying even than distemper; terrifying because it is

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incurable, and because, when it breaks out in a large kennel, every dog dies, or has to be slaughtered.

Hydrophobia in man is a disease still more mysterious. Many refuse to believe in its existence. That human beings die of some disease, apparently a nervous seizure, and always fatal if once it develops itself, no one can deny ; but whether it is tetanus, or what it is, most physicians, I imagine, would hesitate to say.

Years ago there was something like a panic in London, hydrophobia having claimed many victims. No one could have worked harder than I did to discover the victims in question, where they lived and where they died ; but I failed to find one solitary case either of illness or death. I went to Bartholomew's, and all over the place ; but the more inquiries I made, the more puzzled I became ; and one fact—for fact it is—did not tend to make things clearer.

Never within the memory of man has a member of the London Police—Metropolitan or City—been attacked by the disease ; and for forty-six years—for I am able to go back as far as that—they have been bitten by every species of dog, from the lordly St. Bernard to the pampered pug. It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty how many men have passed through the force during that time ; but probably a hundred thousand would be well within the mark. Hundreds there must have been

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of iron constitution and dauntless courage ; hundreds physically weak, and of nervous temperament ; hundreds phlegmatic, and hundreds highly strung and excitable ; hundreds drunkards and hundreds abstainers ; hundreds smokers and hundreds non-smokers ; hundreds saints and hundreds sinners ; and hundreds compelled to live—as I know to my cost—amidst notoriously insanitary surroundings ; and yet, I repeat, not one man among them all has ever been attacked by hydrophobia. I do not attempt to give a reason for this. I only state what I know to be correct.

IX

MY LIFE IN NORTHUMBERLAND

CHANCE or Providence—I very much prefer to think Providence—has, on more than one occasion, prompted me to take a step very momentous as regarded my future, and guided me into that lane—long indeed it was—that eventually came to the turn.

London did not agree with my mother, and after living there for a year she returned North, and took a pretty house on the coast of Northumberland, at Alnmouth—then a beautiful, primitive little fishing village with a fleet of some six or seven herring-boats, now a second Southend or Clacton-on-Sea, with schools, lodging-houses, excursionists, motor-bikes, *bonâ fide* travellers, and other abominations. I left London, not, perhaps, as willingly as she did, and joined her at Alnmouth in '72. She died in '73. I kept the house on, and there I remained for twelve long years. During nearly the whole of that time I managed the lifeboat—apparently to the satisfaction of the public, certainly not to my own, for the crew, with one or two exceptions,

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were a cowardly lot, who I felt certain would be wanting in the hour of danger. Their conduct one Christmas Eve, when I nearly lost my life, decided me on instant resignation; and thankful I was to get quit of my appointment as hon. secretary before disgrace came on us all. How such a crew would have done at the Goodwins I have often wondered.

I made many friends both in South and North Northumberland, and was most hospitably received in their houses, where I used to stay for weeks together; but perhaps of all others Major Browne—then residing at Lesbury, not a mile from Alnmouth, and hunting the country entirely without subscription—showed me most kindness. I dined with him always on hunting-days—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday—frequently on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, and, as sure as the sun rose, on Sunday.

Driving one morning with him to Shiply Lane End, a favourite “meet,” he said: “How would the Chief Constablenesship of the county suit you?” He had held the appointment himself before succeeding to a fortune. “Nothing in the world,” I replied, after a moment’s reflection, “would suit me better.”

“Well,” he continued, “I think that may be arranged. Allgood has completely broken down, and can’t last long now.”

General Allgood, formerly in “the Company’s”

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service, lived, I believe I am correct in stating, quite twenty years after this.

Major Browne, although he did not succeed in getting me that berth, turned my thoughts to police work, and I determined to study hard and prepare myself for any vacancy, in the event of one occurring. With this object, I got an introduction to the Chief Constable of one of the largest Scotch counties, and duly presented myself at his office one December evening. To say that I was received with open arms is to put it mildly. My superior for the time being had formerly served in one of the crackest of Highland regiments, and was, it goes without saying, a very strict disciplinarian, albeit eminently convivial. He had a warm heart and a cool cellar, and before the evening was over—he promptly asked me to dinner—we were sworn friends. “I’ll teach you all I know,” he said to me confidentially, “in three months’ time.” About midnight he addressed me severely: “Parade every morning, remember, Sundays included, my office, ten punctually.” “I won’t be late, sir,” I replied. Next morning I was there to a moment, and was received by the superintendent, who furnished me with the *Scotsman*. “Queer thing, sir,” he said, “the Captain’s late this morning.” Queerer still, the Captain was late every morning.

When he arrived, “Any letters?” was his first query. “No letters, sir,” was the stereotyped reply. “Suppose we go along to the club,” the Captain

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would say, and along we went. "Two small whiskies" was the order promptly given and promptly executed. After disposing of them we played billiards, or took a walk till luncheon-time, then back to the office. "Any letters?" "None this afternoon, sir." In fact, there seldom were any. I can honestly say I have seen more work in my office in the City in one day than you would see in that office in a year. All the little I had to do I did to the Captain's satisfaction. The three months were not wasted altogether, for before I said good-bye to my kind and hospitable friend he wrote the strongest testimonial he could in my favour. Although I don't attach importance to testimonials myself—for I have often seen very inferior men with very superior vouchers—I knew they might be of service to me, and on my return to Northumberland I immediately made for Newcastle to serve under the Chief Constable there, being introduced to him by an intimate friend, then High Sheriff of the county. Captain Nicholls — still living, I am glad to say—the small whiskies finished the Highlander—also received me with great kindness, but had little time to devote to me. He gave me the run of his office; told me there was work twenty-four hours in the day if I wanted it; cautioned me against several members of the force, and finally promised me a testimonial should he, from his own observation and the reports of his superintendents, find I deserved one.

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I saw some rough and dangerous work in Newcastle, principally about the Quayside, but before I had been a month there the Superintendent, Detective Department, Liverpool Constabulary, resigned, and by Captain Nicholls' advice I applied for the appointment. I had a very powerful backing, and when I arrived on the scene of action found myself first favourite.

Providentially for Liverpool and myself, I was beat. I say providentially, for I should have been a failure. It was when the Fenians were much in evidence, and dynamite outrages in the ascendant; and I am convinced now, though I did not realize it then, that neither in the streets nor in the witness-box had I sufficient experience to have done myself credit.

I returned to Alnmouth somewhat crestfallen. Major Bowman, Chief Superintendent, City of London Police, having heard of my defeat in Liverpool, wrote saying he should like to see me should I happen to be in London. Being now forty-four years of age, I scarcely thought it worth while to travel to town for an interview with him; still, I was loath to throw away a chance, and within a week of the receipt of his letter I called in the Old Jewry. I told him I had given up all hope of employment. "Why so?" he said. "In confidence, let me tell you, I don't mean to remain here one day after I have earned my pension; you seem to me just the man to suit Colonel Fraser, and

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the man I recommend you may be sure he will appoint." This was in 1879, and I succeeded Major Bowman in 1885, Colonel Fraser having taken nearly six years to decide between myself and others on the look-out for Bowman's retirement.

I ought to explain that the second appointment in the City—£600 to £800 per annum—is in the gift of the Commissioner; that when I succeeded Fraser, I, in like manner, appointed Major Wodehouse to the berth I had vacated; and that, owing to my age, my first appointment of Chief Superintendent was the only police appointment in Great Britain for which I was eligible.

Those six years were weary ones; still, I lived, like a late noble Duke, on hope. I hunted, shot, and played golf; but whenever I heard from Bowman that he wanted me in the City I was ready to go. The men at the Old Jewry had orders to show me everything, but with one man, Chief Inspector Tillcock, I spent most of my time. A wonderfully fine-looking man he was, and a policeman second to none. He had seen many "soldier officers," candidates for police appointments, come and go; but notwithstanding my return to "the Office" time after time, it never entered into his head, astute though he was, that I might some day be his superior. He didn't think it worth while to study me, but I studied him, and through him most men in the force. At last the day came

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when he found me located permanently. "No need to introduce Major Bowman's successor to you," said Colonel Fraser; "you have known him for years." The inspector's manners were perfect. If he was surprised, he did not show it. "Only too happy, Colonel," he said, bowing gracefully, "that a gentleman I already know so well should have come to assist you."

The next morning familiarity had gone, and discipline reigned in its stead. The inspector came in to make his report, and, curious to say, my first case as an officer of police, though sufficiently tragic, did not find me wanting. A more shocking case, in which, to my disgust, a man of the force was concerned, it would be difficult to exaggerate. The inspector was beginning to give me particulars. "Stop one moment," I said. "That must be Z, of the 2nd Division." "Who told you, sir?"—in the utmost astonishment. "No need to tell me," I replied. "Don't you remember? you gave me this man's character three years ago."

When Colonel Fraser arrived at two o'clock, he was very much upset. "This will bring discredit on the whole force," he said. "I'll get quit of the brute quietly, and tell him to send in his resignation."

"If ever a man deserved dismissal," I ventured to say, "this man does."

"Of course he does," said Fraser; "what was I thinking of?"

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The man was dismissed, and not twenty minutes thereafter committed suicide.

To wheel one's anecdotes into line is not an easy matter. I must tell them as they occur to me.

Very shortly after Queen Victoria came to the throne, one of the most splendid receptions ever given in the City was given in her honour at the Guildhall. Every part of the buildings was utilized, and the youthful Queen apparently enjoyed herself much, and wandered about at will with her favourite lady-in-waiting, the Duchess of Sutherland. In the crypt stood four stalwart officers of the City Police in coats of mail—Tillcock, then a sergeant, being one—each with a lamp in his right hand. They were warned that the Queen would come down, but only for a minute, and enjoined to stand absolutely motionless, and act up to the characters they were supposed to represent—Richard Cœur-de-Lion, the Black Prince, or whoever they were; I forget, if ever I knew. The Queen did come, but, unfortunately, the old armour interested her more than anything else, and, notwithstanding the efforts of the Lord Mayor, who was in the secret, she lingered in front of Tillcock, who felt himself getting shaky. Suddenly the Duchess sprang back, and, pointing to him, said: "That knight's alive. I saw him move."

"Don't talk nonsense!" said the Queen. "Come away."

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“It’s not nonsense,” replied the Duchess, with a laugh. “Yet, my dear knight, you’re not alive after all these years, are you?” And patting his cheek with her hand, she followed the Queen upstairs. Some, no doubt, might have regarded the situation from a comical point of view. Not so Tillcock ; it was tragedy to him.

“By God!” he said, as he told me the story, “I think another second would have finished me. I never was so frightened in my life. I thought if I moved the Queen would take a fit and the Duchess too, and that I should be torn to ribbons or beheaded on Tower Hill.” Whether or not the Lord Mayor arranged this joke—if it was intended as such—“off his own bat,” or whether the Corporation as a body were in the secret, I know not ; but to my mind a more exquisitely silly arrangement could not well have been devised.

Another anecdote of Tillcock, in those days of Test Matches, Rugby squabbles, paid amateurs, and Canadian curlers, will interest my readers more than knights of old and defunct Duchesses. About the year '75 the City Police had a wonderful eleven, captained by Tillcock, who, before donning the blue and gold, had played for his county. So good were they that “W. G.,” then in the very zenith of his fame, took an interest in them, and got together a side to play them at the Oval. Grace having won the toss, Tillcock

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took his men into the field, and in the very first over clean bowled the champion, who took his defeat with great good-humour. As he walked back to the pavilion, calling the sergeant up to him, he said: "Can all bobbies bowl like you?"

"Far better, sir," said Tillcock. "I'm about the worst of the lot."

About testimonials—in case I forget. Albert Grey, now Earl Grey, Governor - General of Canada, I knew intimately when he was a boy, and used to shoot with him at Howick, where pheasants—wild, mark you!—were as fat as if they had been fed on raisins for months. Grey then, young as he was—it was just before he entered the House of Commons—was already making his mark in the county; and although many years his senior, I was always anxious for his advice, which was, needless to say, cheerfully given. One day, when staying at Doxford, three miles from Howick, I jumped on a pony, and cantered over to show him my testimonials. Instantly he was all attention, and began to read them carefully.

"I say, my dear fellow," he remarked, on coming to rather an elaborate one, "this is the best testimonial I ever read in my life."

"I am very pleased indeed," I replied, "to hear your opinion of it, for I wrote it myself."

"What's that you're saying?—what do you mean?"

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“This is what I mean,” I answered : “If a man has not intellect enough to write a testimonial in his own favour, and energy enough to stand over a friend till he signs it, he’s not fit for the position I aspire to.”

“By Jupiter !” said Grey, with a laugh, “there’s little doubt you’re right.”

X

FOUR ANECDOTES

I MUST not preface some of my anecdotes by asserting that "this story I can vouch for the truth of," or it would be necessary I should give the same guarantee to all. The only preface to this, the last of my racing tales, is, "Believe it or not, as you like."

On the eve of the Derby, in Lady Elizabeth's year, I was sitting with a man I knew well in the Great White Horse Inn at Ipswich, where Mr. Pickwick had considerable difficulty in finding his bedroom. My friend seldom went to a race-meeting, but was a most inveterate gambler, and, though a clever and capable officer—soldiering was his trade—was wont to back his opinion most recklessly. For the race of next day he had backed a horse to win, and others for a place, for far more money than he could afford to lose, and his state of anxiety was painful to witness. There was no use telling him he was a fool; I had told him that often enough. To a certain extent I was sorry for him, for the ruling passion in him was irresistible. As well try to keep a drunkard from drink as to

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stop him from "having something on." He could not sit still for more than a minute at a time, but kept walking about the room with a letter in his hand, stopping occasionally to curse the man who had written it for not having sent him some information which would easily have landed him on the right side of the hedge. "I wish it was over," he said. "So do I," I replied. "When do you expect to hear to-morrow?" "Well, if that idiot behaves as he did last year, not before eight o'clock at soonest. Instead of sending me the first three, he sent me a description of the race about a foot long: how Jimmy was sitting perfectly still at the Corner, and how Dick was already in difficulties, and driving him along. Now, I don't care one damn," he continued excitedly, "whether Jimmy was sitting or standing, or Dick walking or driving; all I wanted was the names of the first three past the post." "Don't you know anyone else at Epsom than that ass?" I said, humouring him. "That's well thought of," was the reply. "There's a young fellow, an uncommon cute chap, with whom I used to do a lot of business. I'll send a wire just now he can't misunderstand, and, unless there are a lot of false starts, we'll have his answer, you'll see, by four-thirty, if not sooner." Sitting down at the table, he wrote out, "Instant race is over, wire me simply first horse, second horse, third horse," and out he ran, quite pleased with himself, to send his message off.

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Next day, rather before four-thirty, as he anticipated, the well-known brown, bilious-looking envelope was handed to him on a "charger." Tearing it open, he read: "From Blank, Epsom, to Colonel Blank, Ipswich.—First horse, second horse, third horse." The "uncommon cute chap" had certainly acted up to his instructions. We will draw a veil over the Colonel's language. It beat the record.

Major Browne's house was situated, as I have explained, in a well-populated part of Northumberland. Another house, where I was a very frequent visitor, was in the wilds, "far from the madding crowd." Here there dwelt with their mother three young girls of something like eight, ten, and twelve summers, who had for their governess a Dane or Swede, or some such amphibious animal. This woman was a most accomplished musician, and had a happy home; but, like a well-known "Serene Highness," recently deceased, the longer she remained in England, the worse she spoke—or understood—the language. Grouse and black-game, although she dwelt among them, had seen them living and dead, eaten them hot and cold, tender and tough, she persistently called "ze groose and ze blackbirds." The lady of the house, kind and gentle to everyone, tried hard to make the governess happy and contented; but it was no use. She had grievance after grievance, which she would voluminously try to explain amidst shrieks of

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laughter from her unruly pupils. "Why you laugh?" she would say. "Ze child in my contray nevaire laugh—nevaire; ze are pōlite." One afternoon she came back from church happy for once, and wreathed in smiles. "Oh," she said, "what a sairmon—what loafely sairmon! Ze clairgyman he know my soaffring and ze soaffring of ze other poar governess. You heard? He pray for all ze poar women labouring wid child."

The Head Office of the Newcastle Police Force, in one of the main streets of the city, is an imposing edifice, and attached to it, in my day, was a room in which there was always a couple of detective officers, ready at any time if wanted. Detectives, as I have said more than once, are not particularly scrupulous. Hundreds of times I have wondered how they got their information, hundreds of times I have hoped it was in a legal way, and hundreds of times I have refrained from asking any questions on the subject.

One Friday evening, in the depth of winter, I was sitting by the fire in the detectives' room with a splendid specimen of the breed—Big Morrison—and another man, when the door was burst open, and in rushed a youth of about sixteen in a frantic state of excitement. In most business establishments Saturday was pay-day and a half-holiday, and the money was brought from the bank on Friday evening to facilitate matters. The office where this boy was employed was not 500 yards

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from where we were sitting, and, on the night in question, just as he was about to put the money in the safe and lock up, two men pushed open the door and entered. They turned the gas down, threw him on the floor and gagged him, took the keys from his pocket, opened the safe, and, after tying his hands behind his back, made off with the contents—some £40 or £50 in gold and silver. One man had on a light grey suit; the other was in dark clothes, and wore a “pot” hat with a dint in the crown as if it had been smashed in. During this thrilling narrative Morrison sat stolidly silent, then, reaching down, he put the poker in the fire, and watched it getting hotter and hotter. When it was red-hot, he turned suddenly on the boy: “Have you any more lies to tell,” he said, “or is that the lot?” “It’s not lies, sir; it’s all true,” was the reply. Drawing the poker from between the bars of the grate, Morrison advanced on him. “Tell me this moment where the money is, you young black-guard!” he exclaimed, “or I’ll murder you.” “In the water on this side of the suspension bridge” (Scotswood), gasped the youth. “I shouldn’t wonder if he was speaking the truth this time,” said Morrison. “Put a lead on him, Jim, and take him up to the place.” In less than three hours they were back with every shilling of the money.

Long after I had left the most hospitable of all Northern Counties, I got an invitation from a

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noble lord to stay a week with him on my way to Scotland, and, during my visit, rather a curious coincidence happened. I had then in my service a very smart, good-looking young fellow. Summer and winter, punctual to the very minute, he brought me my tea at 6.30 a.m. He polished my boots till you could see to shave by them; had my guns in beautiful order, and could hold his own in the servants' hall, where, if all tales are true, the table of precedency is rigidly upheld, and discipline always very strictly enforced. Jones, let us call him, was in all respects save one nearly perfect; and that one—his devotion to the fair sex—was constantly getting him into trouble. It may, I fear, lower me in the estimation of my readers when I admit that I would rather have been served as Jones served me—immorality and all—than by a slovenly, unpunctual beggar with the morals of a Bishop. At last, however, this young Lothario went just a little too far, and was relegated to the Bosphorus,* or, to put it less poetically, I had to sack him, which I have never ceased to regret. But I am anticipating. On reaching the station where we had to alight, I found waiting a pretty barouche, with a very swell coachman, evidently from town, on the box; and as Jones walked forward with my coat over his arm, I saw this functionary stoop down, and heard him say, in a low tone, “I thought there was a servant coming, sir.” Although much amused, I was sure trouble

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would ensue, and I was not far wrong. On getting to our destination my host—as all hosts in my opinion should do—showed me my bedroom, and hoped I would be comfortable. I hoped so, too, and towards that desirable result, when he left me, rang the bell for Jones. Jones appeared, looking black as thunder, and without the “Pardon me, sir,” with which he invariably prefaced every sentence, at once gave tongue. “Never was in a place like this in my life. I asked one of the footmen where I was to sleep, and he told me to find out for myself. I can do nothing for you here, sir. Never saw such people. The butler he’s a gentleman, sir; but he’s the only gentleman in the ‘All.” I did not tell Jones he was being boycotted, nor the reason thereof. I merely told him I must have some whisky and water in my room as usual, if he had to get it at the point of the bayonet, and left him standing limp and listless, chewing the cud of despair. Lord Blank, had he known the state of affairs, would have dismissed every servant in the house bar the “gentleman” next morning. I said nothing to him, but went up to my room immediately after dinner, thinking there might be news from “the front,” and what did I see? Jones himself again, standing at attention. He had improvised a bar, something on the lines of the American Bar of blessed memory, where I have imbibed many a “cocktail” and “corpse-reviver,” on which stood quite half a dozen

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bottles—whisky, brandy, seltzer and soda. “Bravo!” I said; “did you break into the cellar?” “No, sir; pardon me, sir, it’s all right now, sir. I can get anything I want.” “How did you manage it?” I asked. “Well, sir, pardon me, sir; but as I was sitting in the servants’ ’all fairly beat, a lady came out of the housekeeper’s room, which I recognized her at once. ‘Pardon me, madam,’ I said, ‘but I think you and I are old friends.’ ‘Bless my ’eart,’ she says, ‘if it ain’t Old Shirt!’ Pardon me, sir, but that’s the name I used to be known by at the 2nd Division”—*i.e.*, Snow Hill Police Station, where, curious to say, this woman had been housekeeper for five or six years. “Enough,” I said with dignity; “go to bed and behave yourself.” The door closed softly, and I was alone with my thoughts. Let us hope Old Shirt was alone with his.

XI

CONCERNING SOME OF MY FRIENDS IN THE
METROPOLIS — CAPTAIN SHAW OF THE FIRE
BRIGADE, AFTERWARDS SIR EYRE SHAW, AND
HIS DAUGHTER—MR. BAYARD, THE AMERICAN
AMBASSADOR—BOBBIE AND BILL ROGERS

SHAW, ever foremost in good-fellowship and hospitality, was the first man who called on me on my arrival in London in January, '85, and we became firm friends. Many a time I have dined with him at his clubs, the Marlborough and the St. James's. When first appointed in 1861 he had much to learn; but he was by nature admirably qualified for the position, and soon mastered every detail of his work. He was a born mechanic, understood an engine as well as any driver on the Great Northern or North-Western understands his, and if anything went wrong could put it right with his own hands. But perhaps his best attribute was the pride he felt in commanding such a corps. I believe he would rather have been head of the London Fire Brigade with two hundred a year than a Cabinet Minister with two thousand.

CAPTAIN SHAW OF THE FIRE BRIGADE

I never missed a fire of any importance in the City, and always aided Shaw to the best of my ability in controlling the crowds which used to flock together as soon as an engine made its appearance. Two fires in particular I remember when Shaw was nearly beaten. One at Révillon Frères in Queen Victoria Street; the other in St. Mary Axe. The former occurred on one of the coldest nights I can remember. The hose were frozen as hard as adamant, and for some time the Brigade was powerless. The fire in St. Mary Axe threatened to burn down half the City, but was splendidly taken in hand, and eventually overcome. That night, when the worst was passed, Shaw was, as usual, in capital spirits. He was always in uniform: helmet, tunic, and long boots. I was always in the oldest suit and shoes I possessed. We were standing together in about six inches of water with rafters and beams falling about us like leaves in October, when, putting his head close to mine, he shouted cheerily, "Why, you've seen more of my work already than Fraser ever saw." "I've had about enough of it," I replied; "you turn on such an infernal amount of water that one can't see a fire in peace and comfort."

Of all the things the late Duke of Sutherland liked was "A nicht wi' Burns." He was a great ally of Shaw's; was, like him, a first-rate mechanic, understood fire-engines and locomotives, and, if all tales are true, many a time acted as fireman, and

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assisted to drive the express from Edinburgh to London. King Edward VII also honoured Shaw with his friendship, and often used to visit the headquarters of the brigade in Southwark Bridge Road. It was Shaw's habit to see every engine at headquarters stabled before he went to bed, every engine, I mean, that should have finished its work and been home again. One evening about midnight an engine, long overdue, had not arrived, and Shaw went to the main door to see if there were any signs of the truant. Just as he put his hand on the door-handle, the bell rang violently, and, opening the door without a second's delay, he saw the King, then Prince of Wales, and the Shah of Persia. The foreign potentate was greatly pleased with the promptitude displayed, and left for his own dominions fully impressed with the belief that the chief of the London Fire Brigade was always to be found twenty-four hours in the day, and 365 days in the year, standing ready behind the door to open it to all comers.

Shaw, in the last years of his service, had very serious difficulties to contend with. Among the many stations under his control was one in Farringdon Street, within my jurisdiction, and there it was that things came to a crisis one afternoon. A man walked in, pushed aside some men of the brigade, and forced his way behind the desk where the senior officer was sitting, drew the books to him, and began turning over the leaves. One of

SHAW AND HIS DAUGHTER

the City Police was appealed to, who promptly bundled the intruder out into the street, vowing vengeance. The individual was a member of the Fire Brigade Committee of the London County Council, and, had he mentioned the fact and proved his identity, no doubt would have been very differently received. This was the beginning of the end. I knew there would be a row, and had not long to wait for it. The beggar on horseback, the cause of all the mischief, had a strong following in the Council, and nothing would satisfy them but the dismissal of one or more of the brigade. The chief stood by his men, as I knew he would, and the end came. This was years before illness overtook him. He was in perfect health, devoted to his work, and as fit for it as on the day of his appointment. His resignation came as a great surprise to his many friends and to the public. Various reasons were assigned for it. He resigned solely and entirely to avoid dismissal—he told me so himself.

Needless to add that such an officer would have received very different treatment at the hands of the London County Council as at present constituted.

Shaw's daughter was his constant companion. In health and in sickness she waited on him. She inherited her father's dauntless courage, and went about doing all the good she could, absolutely alone, in one of the worst districts of London, the

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Southwark Bridge Road and streets abutting on it, the New Cut (dubbed by some wit the "Recent Incision") in Lambeth, and others in the "L." Division. I warned Shaw she ran terrible risks. "So I thought when she began visiting," he said, "and used to tell some of the men to keep her in sight and see after her; but I gave it up. Nobody will hurt her," and, to their credit be it said, he was right.

When one gets an hour on horseback before going to his office, one can settle down more contentedly to his work. I used to ride police horses in the park; but they were seldom satisfactory, and I asked Bradford, a consummate horseman and judge of a horse, to see if he could find me a real good hack. Tilling, hearing he had been making inquiries, found a pony which Bradford inspected, tried on the Embankment, and sent on to Portland Place, where I was then living, the price asked for him being £37 10s. A more beautiful pony I never saw. Bobbie was coal-black, under fourteen hands, and in all his paces just about perfect. "You very seldom see a pony like that, sir," said Batt, whom I called in when Bobbie went lame. "If he's sound, he's worth a hundred guineas." He was not sound, and Tilling never pretended he was; but his looks captivated me. I bought him on the spot, and joined the "Liver Brigade"—a gallant squadron of horsemen light and heavy, to be found every

MR. BAYARD, AMERICAN AMBASSADOR

morning in the Row, walking sedately, trotting briskly, cantering gaily, and, when the policeman's back was turned, galloping furiously. This was in the year '96, the year before Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and Bradford and I, when riding up and down, used to take council together on that event, momentous to both of us.

One morning an elderly man, very well mounted, turned his horse and joined us. Bradford introduced me, but, as often happens, I did not catch the name. We rode round as far as the Marble Arch, when the stranger left us. "Who is that?" I asked. "Mr. Bayard, the American Ambassador," replied Bradford. "Where have you been all this time not to know him?"

Apparently I impressed Mr. Bayard favourably, for, whenever he descried Bobby, with his Mero-dach-like action, he joined me. Poor little Bobbie, in addition to being unsound, was a little too light-hearted for London. Two of his shies would take him across the road at Stanhope Gate, and when he was in a kicking humour he would go off like a catherine-wheel, and kick for a couple of minutes at a stretch. I sent him back to Tilling, who was good enough to give me what I paid for him.

That Mr. Bayard honoured me with his friendship, and gave me a pressing invitation to visit him in his own country, is enough to put on my tombstone, if there's nothing else to put on it.

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He was very English in his tastes, and strongly biassed in favour of England. He knew most capitals well—had been, if I mistake not, an attaché in Paris; but London, in his opinion, was immeasurably in front of them all. (I never drew his attention to Peebles.) “New York,” he said to me, “is a splendid city; but I have told my countrymen that, until they have seen London, they cannot be judges or draw comparisons between the great cities of the West. So English was he—I speak here with all due reserve—that he got into serious trouble with the White House, and was in danger of being recalled. One day he went down to Woolwich, and saw everything there that was to be seen. I asked him what he thought of the Academy, familiarly termed the “Shop,” and told him how highly it was thought of as a training-school for our young officers. “Ah,” he said, “there we beat you completely. You have nothing in the Old Country like West Point. You must see West Point when you come over.” That trip, to my great grief, was never accomplished. Our last meeting was at the Agricultural Hall, where I found him lost in admiration over the winner in the Open Hunter’s Class. “You or I could do well with a horse like that, my friend,” he said, as he wrung my hand. I never saw him again. He died very shortly after returning to America. His charm of manner equalled Mr. Gladstone’s. I can say no more.

CONCERNING REPORTERS

Mr. Bayard spoke very slowly, both in ordinary conversation and in public. On one occasion I read a speech of his in the *Times*, and next morning when we met I said: "Allow me, sir, to congratulate you on the splendid speech you made last night." "Which speech?" he said, with a quiet laugh, "for, as usual, I appear to have made several. . . . Your reporters," he continued, "are excellent men in their way, but sometimes their dinner appears to be of more importance than their business." Anyone who has often been present at public dinners must recognize the truth of Mr. Bayard's remarks. When carriages are announced and the company is "scaling," the hurry of some of them to see each other's notebooks, and to get from them what surely they might have got direct, has no doubt struck others as well as myself.

And apropos of reporters. On a certain January evening in a certain year, a lady was expected at Dover by the evening boat from Calais. I was anxious about the case, and decided on going to Dover and bringing her up to London myself. I went down early, taking a detective inspector with me; enjoyed a walk by the "sad sea-waves," and dined comfortably at the Lord Warden. Next day, on opening my morning paper, I read an account of my proceedings, and on getting to my office found three or four of the illustrated papers ostentatiously displayed on the desk for

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my edification. In them was a representation of myself—a most excellent representation I must admit it was—standing, hat in hand, in front of a lady on the pier at Dover; and in the newspaper I had just read, “Sir Henry advanced and saluted the lady”; the nature of the salute, whether chaste or otherwise, was not specified. Seeing that I was never on the pier at all, but was sitting comfortably ensconced in the boat-train, waiting till the lady in question was brought from the boat and given into my custody, the reporter can scarcely be congratulated on his accuracy.

On November 24, '94, Bill Rogers had his portrait presented to him at the Mansion House “by his grateful friends,” Lord Rosebery making the presentation. No one present had more reason to be grateful to the old Rector—seventy-five that day—than I had, for he always went any distance out of his way to do me a kindness. Years before, we gave him a dinner, Lord Rosebery, always his staunch comrade, in the chair. His lordship's speech teemed with mirth and humour, evoking round after round of applause. Bill's was a very long oration, in which he gave details of his whole life from his Eton days onwards; but what surprised and pleased me was the allusion he made to myself, simply in the endeavour to make my promotion more secure and bring me into notice. “If anyone comes to harm in the City,” he said, “I do not think it will be the

BILL ROGERS OF BISHOPSGATE

old Rector. Many a time, in driving home at night, I have seen our Chief Superintendent of Police on the watch. Major Smith has done much to make our streets safe, and my only fear is that he may be tempted to leave by the offer of some more lucrative appointment. His place in the City would be difficult to fill. His loss to myself personally, whether as a friend or a protector, would be a severe one."

The Rector used to ride from the City to Mickleham, where he had a beautiful old red-brick house and a pretty, picturesque garden. It was on one of his rides down to this house that his horse fell with him and he injured his spine. Everything was tried—baths at home and abroad, electricity and massage—and tried in vain. He remained paralyzed to the day of his death. He was unable to walk without assistance, which must have been a terrible trial to a man who used to lead the active life he did ; but he never complained. "How much I have to be thankful for!" I have often heard him say. Would that we all could face our trials as he did !

Another City friend—Sir James Anderson—I had almost forgotten. I used to meet him at No. 1, Leadenhall Street, the London office of the celebrated Black Ball Line of packets trading with Australia—a very prosperous concern some forty years ago, the London house, now extinct, being designated T. M. Mackay and Co., and the

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Liverpool house James Baines and Co. I knew Mackay well, and through him got acquainted with Anderson, who at one time had the command of the *Great Eastern*. Anderson was replete with stories of the sea, more particularly connected with "the Big Ship"—for she was a Leviathan in those days—and one of his stories is worth telling. He was appointed to the command in 1865, his chief officer being Robert Charles Halpin. Anderson was afterwards managing director of the Eastern Telegraph Co., and gave over the command of the *Great Eastern* in 1868, being succeeded by Halpin. Anderson, with whom I got fairly intimate, had crossed and recrossed the Atlantic quite as often as he cared about, and was delighted to get a shore job. He found, however, he had to cross once again—this time as a passenger—his old chief officer being in command of the vessel. The two men were most excellent friends; each knew the perfections and imperfections of the other to a nicety.

In this Life I have written much of the fair sex; and the fair sex it was that very nearly brought the *Great Eastern* to an untimely end.

This is the tale as told me by Anderson: "When ladies were on board, Halpin forgot all about the ship; in fine weather he would have half a dozen or more on the bridge, telling yarn after yarn, and leaving the vessel to navigate itself. One lovely afternoon on the outward voyage he was so en-

THE "GREAT EASTERN"

gaged ; the sea was like a mill-pond, and we were going full steam ahead. The vessel's course lay directly for a sunken reef, laid down in the charts, and well known to both of us, and as he gave no indication of altering her course, I began to feel very uneasy. Making my way up to the bridge, I saluted, and said : ' I beg your pardon, sir, but we are nearing the reef.' ' You be damned, Anderson !' was all the reply I got, and down to deck I returned, hardly knowing what to do. I waited a few minutes longer ; the surf was then visible on the reef, and the situation was getting desperate. Making my way up at a run, I again addressed him. Not one word did he say in reply, but, taking his watch out of his pocket, he gazed at it attentively for a few seconds ; then, replacing it, he exclaimed : ' To one minute, by God ! Port your helm !' I may be wrong," concluded Anderson, " but I honestly believe that had I not gone up a second time the vessel would have been lost."

XII

THE FASCINATION OF CRIME — “START ON THE CROSS, YOU SELDOM RETURN TO THE SQUARE” — DEALS WITH BAFFLED HANGMEN, WITH LOVING AND WITH JEALOUS WOMEN, AND ILLUSTRATES ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON’S FAITH IN “THE SEX”

It is strange what a fascination crime and criminals have for respectable members of society. Dickens was in his element when unravelling an intricate case, and Henry Irving, to my poor judgment, was at his best in “The Lyons Mail.” Either would have preferred a walk in Bangor Street in the cold of a winter’s night, by the light of the flickering oil, to a summer’s day by Deeside or “the Braes o’ Bonny Doon.”

Crime draws us—a veritable loadstone.

Some years ago a medical student of great promise happened to share a lodging with a catcher of thieves. A few short months decided his fate. As the sword was abandoned for the pruning-hook, so was the scalpel for the truncheon. Bartholomew’s and its ministering angels—most of

HOW CRIME FASCINATES

them young, and many of them pretty—no longer attracted him; the fascination lay in the frowzy dens and common lodging-houses where brawny Amazons preside over the Irish stew, “where vice is closely packed and lacks the room to turn.” Were Roberts and Kitchener on one platform, bound for the plains where soldiers meet in mimic warfare, and the chained gang on another, the saviours of their country would have a miserable following—they would not be “in it” with the malefactors.

When a young man is determined not to follow the trade chosen for him by his parents, but to strike out in another direction, it is bad policy to thwart him. Picton was meant by his parents to wield a pen in a writer’s office; Hector Macdonald to trot about with a yard measure. They chose other weapons—with what success England in its hour of need was fated to discover. The medical student, when he abandoned one trade and chose another, chose wisely, for a better or more intelligent officer than Robert Sagar I never had under my command.

On the morning of January 24, 1886, snow lay to the depth of three or four inches in the streets of the City, and constables who had been on duty for eight weary hours were longing for relief. The police are very thick on the ground in the “one square mile.” There was always a man in Bishops-gate Churchyard, and another less than a hundred

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yards from him in Broad Street. Suddenly the latter, a man named Hutt, thought he saw the pavement rise within a short distance of where he was standing, and going cautiously forward, stood at attention. Presently the pavement—a cellar-flap in front of a jeweller's shop—rose again. Stepping on to the top of it, he whistled for assistance, and was instantly joined by the constable from the churchyard. Lifting the flap, they saw a man about thirty years of age, and pulling him up, marched him off to the Old Jewry with 80 watches and 219 rings on him. Sagar, the "stickit" doctor, I instructed to see to the case, and endeavour to find out the antecedents of the man arrested. Nothing was known in those days of "finger-print" identification; all we had to aid us were photographs, many of them taken by force—for criminals used to fight and struggle in order to prevent a correct representation being got of their features—and nearly all faded and unreliable. There were many albums filled with them at the Old Jewry, but Sagar was not long before he appeared in my room. "That's Donald Grant, sir," he said, handing me a photo in which I could see no resemblance whatever to the prisoner. "I am quite sure of him, sir," continued Sagar, "although he is ten years older since it was taken. You remember he tried to escape from Portland; was shot on the inside of the left thigh and recaptured." We stripped him, and there was the scar distinctly

JAMES MENSON, ALIAS LEE

visible. Commissioner Kerr gave Grant a light sentence—eighteen months' hard labour. He did that, committed another burglary shortly after his release, was again apprehended, and again tried at the Old Bailey. He got ten years—his second stretch of that length — but the Scythe-bearer stepped in and shortened it by one-half.

A man named James Menson, a blacking-maker in Cork, was one of the most desperate ruffians the Emerald Isle ever produced, and had done two or three terms of penal servitude before coming to London and joining the gang of which Jack Martin was a member. Menson lived in Somers Town, and was an adept, *à la* Peace, in disguising both his appearance and his voice. So confident was he of escaping detection that he used to walk about in the evening, when all the police of the district were on the look-out for him, and has been known to enter a tobacconist's shop and make a purchase when a constable was standing at the counter.

Shortly after coming to London, Menson changed his name to Lee. A young man of that name murdered his mistress, who had shown him great kindness, at Babbacombe, on the Devonshire coast. He was found guilty by the jury, and he was sentenced to death. When placed on the scaffold, the executioner pulled the lever, but the drop failed to act, and Master Lee, instead of falling down into the pit with his neck broken, remained standing comfortably on the level. Three

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times they tried to hang him, and three times they failed. He was then taken back to his cell, and eventually reprieved, the Home Office having decided—with Home Office logic—that the nerves of this amiable youth having been sorely tried, no further attempt should be made to hang him. Menson, having read or heard of this miscarriage of justice, was hugely delighted, and altered his name to Lee on the spot. “They couldn’t hang him,” he said, “no more can they hang me.”

Lee, like Martin, had a first-rate six-shooter, and that weapon led to his arrest. After the Romford murder his life hung on a thread. Burglary, until things blew over, was entirely suspended, and he got into very low water. The police, although completely baffled, had their wits about them, and concluded that the next step would be a visit to the pawnbroker’s to pledge the revolver and get funds to support himself and his wife. So it turned out. Every pawnbroker in the district had his instructions; and one evening, when an individual, muffled up to the ears in a comforter—the weather being stifling—offered a revolver, the man behind the screen could not decide how much to advance on it till he had quietly sent out a boy by the back-door; and Lee found himself fairly trapped. He managed by a desperate effort to get out of the shop, but police and public were too many for him, and he was captured.

I had heard so much of this man that I was very

THE IRRECLAIMABLE CRIMINAL

anxious to see him, and when he was brought for trial to the Old Bailey—by “Habeas Corpus,” the feeling in Essex being so strong against him—I told the prison warder to open his cell-door and put me in beside him. This was just before he was taken upstairs to be put in the dock, and was the last interview he had with anyone, save with his wife on the day before his execution at Chelmsford. I stayed with him only a minute or two, and was not sorry to leave the cell, for his demeanour was far from conciliatory.

Humanitarians tell us that no man is irreclaimable; that, were everyone treated the right way, leniently and kindly, we should find redeeming traits in his character, which, if fostered and cultivated, would make a good man of him. I am of a different opinion. Lee, as he walked from the condemned cell to the scaffold, told the Chaplain to “stop his damned preaching. He would have none of it.”

Blaspheming to the end, he had the rope put round his neck, the white cap drawn over his face, and then “My poor wife!” was audible to all. Cruel and relentless, with more than one murder on his guilty conscience, he had lived his life to its very conclusion without giving any indication of a better nature. Then, and not till then, was discovered the one redeeming trait in his character, “the one fair drop of water at the bottom of the weed-choked well.” The only chord that would

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vibrate had been struck—affection for his wife left to face the world alone, the affection a tigress feels for her cubs.

Omnia vincit amor, nos et cedamus amori—Love conquers all: love brings down a woman whose heart has never known one sinful or impure thought to the level of her partner's in joy or sorrow, be that level what it may. Relatives are abandoned without a pang, religion renounced without a thought. Love knits hearts together, but sin shared in by both, by the strong man and the trusting woman, is a bond of union more difficult to sever. That Lee's emotion, when hovering on the brink of eternity, was genuine I am most ready to admit; that he might have been reclaimed I very much doubt. Had he been reprieved and eventually liberated by an invertebrate Home Secretary, would he, or could he, have led a better life? To think that he would is absurd; to think that he could, equally so. Year after year he has lived by crime; to do an honest day's work would never enter his head. As the vixen prowls round the hen-roost, he has prowled about at enmity with everyone, emerging from his den when honest men seek their rest and "thieves do foot by night." He has made his bed, and on that bed must he lie.

Stevenson, like Starlight, was uniformly courteous and chivalrous to "the sex." In his early days, when walking home from college along the Bridges, or Princes Street, he was always in

R. L. STEVENSON AND "THE SEX"

a "brown study," and collisions were not infrequent; but whether he collided with a rag-picker or a Duchess—Duchesses, by the way, were scarce in Princes Street—the apology was the same, quite as ample in the former case as in the latter. In "Memories and Portraits" he tells us of a beautiful housemaid with whom he had an interview in a "certain graveyard"—how her hair came down, and "in the shelter of the tomb my trembling fingers helped her to repair the braid." This infatuation had but an ephemeral existence; his devotion to "the sex" ended only with his life.

One lovely day, as we lay on the grass at Swanston Cottage, with the hen-house that was destined to shelter Champdivers in full view, we discoursed of women, and soon found ourselves wide asunder as the Poles. "You ought to know," he said earnestly, "but say no more; let me die in my belief."

"My poor wife!" were the Romford murderer's last words. "Oh, my wife!" exclaimed Hodson, the bravest of the brave, at the capture of the Begum's Kothi, as he fell back choked with blood.

In days like the present, when chastity is at a discount, when husbands part from wives and wives from husbands for a consideration, when hundreds struggle for admittance to the Divorce Court to gloat over the racy revelations of the last "society scandal," and as many are shut out disappointed

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and heart-broken at their “beastly luck,” might not shameless men, and still more shameless women, take home to themselves and learn a lesson from the dying words of a murderer or a hero, whether uttered on the scaffold or the battlefield ?

In talking with Stevenson, it was neither my wish nor my intention to bring him to my way of thinking. All I had meant to say was that women never do things by halves: when good, they are good; when bad, they out-Herod Herod; and, when actuated by jealousy, stick at nothing. In the “Ebb-Tide” Mr. Huish resorted to vitriol to have his revenge. With men this crime is almost unknown; with women it is of constant occurrence. Two cases, which even to this day I can never recall without a most unchristian-like feeling, occurred in the force within a few months of each other. A young fellow who had served in the Marine Artillery joined the City Police—a wonderfully handsome man he was—and brought a wife with him, a very repulsive-looking woman. She must often have wondered, after a look at herself in the glass, what such a man as her husband could have seen in her to induce him to marry her; and this feeling no doubt grew on her and led to the tragedy which ensued. She could not, in fact, believe that she was his only love, and, maddened by jealousy—purely imaginary, as far as I was ever able to discover—used to follow and watch him when on his beat, standing in courts and doorways to get proof of his guilt. This having

VITRIOL

got to her own satisfaction, she lay in wait for him on his return home about 6.30 in the evening, and as he entered the house, threw a cupful of vitriol right in his face. Screaming with agony, he called for water (not that that would have done him any good), but his wife, reviling him and enjoying his sufferings, held on to their servant, a little girl-of-all-work, and prevented her from getting near the sink. Eventually the girl got out, and the man was removed to Bartholomew's. On hearing what had happened, I followed. One eye was totally destroyed, the other very seriously injured; but, after weeks of treatment, the sight was saved.

For this atrocious crime the woman got nine months' imprisonment!

Had the victim of the second outrage taken my advice, the tragedy might have been averted. His wife had threatened on more than one occasion to "spoil his beauty," and, knowing her jealous and revengeful disposition, I sent for the man and advised him to take legal advice and get quit of her. He assured me it was unnecessary; said he was very fond of her; that she would never hurt him, and, not a fortnight afterwards, met his fate. She took better aim than the other woman, or used more vitriol, for the wretched man lost the sight of both eyes.

This fiend in human shape got only five years' penal servitude — not one-fourth of what she deserved.

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

In ancient times women, maddened by jealousy and thirsting for revenge, hired a bravo to sweep from their path lovers they no longer loved; but even the Princess Clœlia, in the streets of the Roman capital, where life was held of little account, hesitated to do what women have attempted in the streets of London. The Princess refused to destroy body and soul, and turned with a shudder from Ludovico when he talked of the "greater vendetta" for "Gerardo Mio." The "lesser vendetta," as explained by the bravo to the Princess, "is the death of the body only. We watch our man come out of a church, or take him in an innocent hour. In the 'greater vendetta' we catch him hot from some unrepented sin."

In "Leaves of a Life" Montagu Williams tells several stories corroborative of what I have stated in this chapter.

George Henry Lamson was a poisoner, second only to Catherine Williams—hanged at last in 1856 after her sixth or seventh murder—or the Glasgow doctor, Pritchard.

Lamson poisoned his brother-in-law, Percy Malcolm John, in the year '81. The boy had something like £3,000, which, in the event of his death, would come to his sisters. An elder brother of Percy's, with the same amount of money, similarly willed, had died some time previously, poisoned also, without doubt.

One would think that Mrs. Lamson's belief in

WOMAN'S DEVOTION

her husband's innocence would have been shaken as the prosecuting counsel brought fact after fact, every one more damning than the other, before the presiding judge, Mr. Justice Hawkins, and the jury. But no; the man she had sworn to love, honour, and obey she believed in to the last.

Montagu Williams, who defended her husband, pays this tribute to her devotion :

“Day by day”—during the trial, which lasted a week—“a thin little figure sat half concealed behind the jury-box, and as the public were leaving the court every evening at the end of the day's proceedings, this little figure would steal, almost unobserved, from its hiding-place, and, standing close underneath the dock, would take the prisoner's hand and kiss it most affectionately.”

I was at Bow Street when Lamson was committed for trial, but was not present at his execution. He acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and made full confession of both murders.

XIII

HOW THE "CHRISTIAN MARTYRS" GOT RATHER THE WORST OF IT

THE Edlingham burglary, which occurred about 1 a.m. on February 7, 1879, was a brutal and commonplace crime; but certain circumstances connected with it were, as the Home Secretary said in the House of Commons, "most singular and unprecedented." About daybreak the same morning two Irishmen, Michael Branaghan and Peter Murphy, were apprehended in Clayport, Alnwick, committed for trial at the Spring Assizes, and sentenced by Mr. Justice Manisty to penal servitude for life. The Judge, curious to say, had been born at Edlingham Vicarage, the scene of the outrage, seventy years previously, his father being then Vicar of the parish.

Branaghan and Murphy served ten years, and were then liberated, Charles Richardson and George Egdell having confessed to the burglary, and declared that they, and they alone, had committed it.

I had nothing to do with the conviction of the

GUILTY, OR NOT GUILTY?

“innocents,” but, seeing that I knew both men when they were working as drainers at Doxford; that I knew the Vicarage and its inmates, every foot of the moor adjacent, and every foot of the road by which the burglars, whoever they were, made their way back to Alnwick, I was interested in the case. Branaghan and Murphy having been convicted almost entirely on police evidence, that evidence, so the public decided, must necessarily have been false; and three men of the County Constabulary had to stand their trial, before Mr. Justice Denman at Newcastle, for “procuring, making, and giving false evidence” against them. The magistrates of the county, to most of whom I was personally known, took a different view, and asked me to send down from London the best man I could find to defend them, and thus I had, indirectly, a good deal to do with this *cause célèbre*.

Edward E. T. Besley was then at his best—a finer specimen of a fighting barrister there was not in London. I drove along to the Temple at once and secured him. The trial was a glorious triumph for him. There was not, as he put it, enough evidence against the men “to hang a dog,” and when the verdict of “Not guilty” was given, the Judge remarked it was “a very right verdict.” In his speech Besley had to go over much of the evidence given against Branaghan and Murphy. The case, he said, was “ten thousand times

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

stronger” against those men now than it was in ’79; there was more evidence now than was given before Mr. Justice Manisty then. “Egdell and Richardson had been described as ‘Christian martyrs’; he preferred to describe them as steeped to the lips in crime, with a terrible suspicion of the murder of P.C. Gray behind them”—a constable who was done to death a short time before the burglary.

Mr. Justice Manisty—a thoroughly sound criminal lawyer—in passing sentence on Branaghan and Murphy, said the circumstances were “overwhelmingly against them”; the verdict, in his opinion, was “perfectly correct.”

Besley was absolutely certain—as I always was, and am to this day—that the original men were the guilty men, and that the police, whose animus, looking to the murder of P.C. Gray, must have been far stronger against Egdell and Richardson than against them, made no mistake from start to finish.

The man who took a leading part in the agitation which resulted in the release of the “innocents” and the prosecution of the constables was the Rev. Jevon J. Muschamp Perry, Vicar of St. Paul’s, Alnwick—now gone to the majority.

Shortly after Branaghan and Murphy returned to Alnwick, the reverend gentleman wrote a book, entitled “The Edlingham Burglary, or Circumstantial Evidence,” two excerpts from

DARTMOOR

which, both relating to Branaghan, are worth recording. .

“His first two years at Dartmoor were the bitterest part of his prison life . . . mental agony, hunger, and cold. . . . Often he threw himself on the floor of his cell, unable to touch a morsel of food. . . . He declares now that if anyone would pay down into his hand 20,000 sovereigns to undergo again six months more of what he suffered at Dartmoor, he would not do it” (*sic*).

Branaghan, if my memory serves me right, when apprehended, apparently could not sign his name, but made an X, “his mark”; yet, notwithstanding his sufferings and want of appetite, he must have made considerable progress with his education, for this is a facsimile of the letter he wrote—his last—to the Home Secretary :

“RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,

“I, the undersigned petitioner, still most solemnly declare my innocence, and although I cannot expect my word to be taken in the matter, yet if my case could by any possibility be looked into, my allegation will be found borne out by the facts. I have never been in prison before my present sentence, which relegates me to separation from my dear wife and children, to penal servitude for life—a punishment which would be severe if I were guilty, but which is monstrous and intolerable, I being innocent. Therefore, I do pray that your

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

Right Honourable self will give my case your kind consideration, and grant me the justice which I plead for.

“ I am, Right Honourable Sir,

“ Your humble and obedient Supplicator,

“ MICHAEL BRANAGHAN.”

To this letter is appended a note by Michael's reverend friend—

“ Branaghan composed and wrote this himself, without assistance of any kind.” !!

Would that anyone would offer me 20,000 sovereigns to do six months in Dartmoor!

In 1890 I met Besley at dinner. He told me he had just been warmly congratulated on having “ last week ” made the best speech in defence of a prisoner he ever had made at the Old Bailey. “ Possibly it was,” he said ; “ but the best speech I ever made in my life I made in that case of yours at Newcastle.”

To sum up the whole case, the circumstances, as the Home Secretary said, were “ singular and unprecedented ”—until, he might have added, Mr. Justice Denman laid bare the facts, and made them as clear as noonday. In his address to the jury his lordship used these words : “ In regard to the statements of these men, Egdell and Richardson—that they were told they could not be punished, and that they believed them up to

E. E. T. BESLEY

the time of their trial—nobody had come forward to contradict them . . . might that not really have caused these men to come forward with a sort of notion that they were being kind to other men who had got into trouble, and believing that there might still be an actual case against them in regard to the former case ?” Continuing, the Judge said : “ I can hardly believe what Egdell said about the clergyman, but the man said it, and swore to it, and swore that it operated in his mind to the very last.”

Besley had this trump card—that Egdell and Richardson had been assured they could not be punished—up his capacious sleeve all the time, but, having won hands down, thought it unnecessary to play it.

The surprise of the “ Christian martyrs ” on getting five years instead of travelling back to Clayport to have a carouse with the “ innocents ” must certainly have been unprecedented.

XIV

INTRODUCES SUPERINTENDENT JAMES MACWILLIAM,
AND GIVES AN ACCOUNT OF THE BURGLARY
AT NETHERBY AND SUBSEQUENT MURDER AT
PLUMPTON, IN CUMBERLAND

To choose a partner, whatever your business may be, requires most careful consideration. To choose the head of the detective office in my business requires more forethought than to choose your wife. You spend far more of your time, if you do your work conscientiously, in the company of the former than of the latter.

James MacWilliam was born at Cairnie, Aberdeenshire—a true Aberdonian : honest, upright, and of exceptionally good education. He had a soul above the County Constabulary ; travelled up to London and took the shilling when Daniel Whittle Harvey was Commissioner ; remained during the twenty-seven years that Sir James Fraser ruled at the Old Jewry ; and finally served me to the day of my retirement. MacWilliam had a thorough knowledge of the criminal law, in addition to his high character ; and, notwithstanding the Meikle-

NETHERBY BURGLARY AND MURDER

John-Druscovitch scandal at Scotland Yard, which shook the confidence of the public in plain-clothes officers to its very foundation, both my predecessor and I always trusted him implicitly.

The Netherby burglary took place at the end of October, 1885, and after the second crime—the murder—a full account of what happened, together with a description of the three men wanted, was forwarded to me. Jack Martin, during all the time I knew him, had lived in the East End of London, and “practised” only there or in the Home Counties. Still, I said to MacWilliam: “This must be Jack Martin again. Depend upon it, he is one of the three”; and I was right.

When the men were safely in Carlisle Gaol, Rolf, a detective-sergeant of the H Division, was sent down to see if he could identify any or all of them; and in the first cell he was taken to was Jack, in no way put about, but cool and collected, as usual. “Well,” he said, “what’s the chance this time, Rolf?” “Chance!” replied Rolf, “you haven’t the ghost of a chance if what I hear is true.” “That’s it, is it?” said Martin, shaking him warmly by the hand. “You never did me no dirty tricks; you always tried to take me fair. I won’t give you no more trouble. Good-bye.”

Besides the two men hanged with him at Carlisle, Martin had other pals, notably Jimmy Smith, alias “One-armed Jimmy,” and Menson, alias Lee, hanged at Chelmsford for shooting

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

Inspector Simmonds, of the Essex Constabulary. Lee and Martin always carried six-shooters, and from information received after the former's execution, I knew that the latter was concerned with him in the murder of Simmonds between Romford and Rainham, and told Rolf to try and get hold of him.

The Commercial Road in those days on Sunday evening resembled, from one point of view, some of the streets of Edinburgh. You might walk from one end to the other without meeting a living soul. One summer evening, on the day in question, Rolf was walking along "The Road," when, just opposite the Theatre of Varieties, he met Jack Martin full in the face. "I want you, Martin," he said, advancing on him. "My name's not Martin, Rolf," replied Jack. "You know me, anyway," retorted Rolf. "Better come quietly, Jack." Slipping his hand into his pocket and pulling his cap firmly down on his head, Martin stood ready for him. "It was certain death, sir," Rolf said, when he told me the story. "He had one murder on his conscience, and another wouldn't have mattered, and I had to let him go." It was disappointing, but I could not blame him. I suspect, had I been in his position, I should have done as he did.

Since that night Martin was never seen by the London police till after the murder at Plumpton, and no photograph, as far as I could ascertain, was ever taken of him.

MORE OF NETHERBY

But now we must cast back, and leave the airless streets and stifling atmosphere of London—harder to bear, I used to think, in a fine October than at any other period of the year—and return to breezy Cumberland and the banks of the Solway, with the haws and rowan-berries still clustering on the hedges.

The burglary at Netherby was committed by four men—John Martin, alias John White; Anthony Rudge, alias Walsh, alias Fennel; James Baker; and Jimmy Smith, alias “One-armed Jimmy.”

Martin described himself as a “cigar-maker,” Rudge as a “dog-trainer”—“dog-stealer” would have been more correct, for he had worked for years successfully at that trade—and Baker as a “cabinet-maker.” I don’t smoke many cigars myself, but all that Martin made during the last three or four years of his life I would undertake to finish in an afternoon, or stow away in the smallest drawer of the smallest cabinet Mr. James Baker ever had a hand in constructing. As Jimmy Smith was not in custody till I arrested him, nearly four months after his pals had been apprehended, he had no opportunity of drawing on his imagination for a profession.

Netherby is one of the most beautiful places in the North of England, and in the autumn, by permission of the proprietor—in ’85 Sir Frederick Graham was the Squire—a coursing meeting is held on the estate between Longtown and Gretna,

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drawing together a vast assemblage of scoundrels of all sorts. Three of our four scoundrels knew the place, and had been there in former years. Martin had been induced to join the party in the expedition, from which he was fated never to return, and no doubt hoped to combine business with pleasure.

Though well acquainted with Longtown and that part of the property on which the meeting was held, none of the four men seem to have known anything about Netherby House; for a woman working on the road between the two lodges was asked in the forenoon of October 28 by Rudge, whom she afterwards identified, if the master of the "big house" was at home. The whole affair was, in fact, quite unworthy of such adepts in the art of burgling; rashly and clumsily devised, it was sure to end in disaster. That evening, at 8.15, Lady Graham having gone downstairs to dinner, the head housemaid went to her room, found the door locked from the inside, and instantly gave the alarm. The butler and valet went out, saw a garden seat, upon which a ladder, too short to reach the window, had been placed, and climbed up. Marks of men's fingers were found and some jewellery was missing. Information was at once sent to Kingstown Police-Station, whence it was wired to Carlisle, eight miles from Netherby, and the police got instructions to watch all roads leading from the North. Four men were soon descried

“ONE-ARMED JIMMY”

making the best of their way for the South. In an enemy's country, 300 miles from their base, provisions unprocurable, and liable to have their flank turned at any moment, they hadn't the luck Kitchener had at Omdurman. On being stopped and questioned, they pulled out revolvers and fired. Sergeant Roche was shot by Martin in the arm, and P.C. Johnstone by Rudge through the lungs. P.C. Fortune, who met them farther on—that is, nearer Carlisle—was terribly injured about the head and face, and left insensible on the road.

Jimmy Smith, seeing the whole country would be roused, now left his pals and made for London. How he got there I never could discover, but it was a wonderful feat to accomplish. He must have bought food several times on the way, and every constable in England and Scotland was on the look-out for him.

Martin, Rudge, and Baker got to Carlisle, and took refuge in the goods-station of the L. and N.-W. Railway, where they lay all that night and all the next day—the 29th. That evening the station-master at Plumpton noticed three men without tickets, and news of the burglary having reached him, sent for Byrnes, the local policeman. Meantime, the men, in an effort to get food and drink, made rapidly for the Pack-Horse Inn, about three-quarters of a mile from the station. Having got some bread and rum, they were returning to the station again when they met Byrnes. He, poor

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fellow, attempted to stop them, when one of them shot him through the head. His body was drawn across the road and thrown over a dyke. He was still breathing when found, about half an hour afterwards.

There was no passenger train at that hour for the South, so the ruffians made for Penrith, and were seen to get on to a goods-train and conceal themselves under a tarpaulin. On getting to Tebay Junction the guard got some porters together and pulled the murderers out by the legs. They fought desperately, but Martin and Rudge were secured, Baker escaping in the confusion. He was seen to jump on to another train, at the risk of his life, but they were ready for him at Lancaster. As he was running across the station to the platform for London he was stopped, and sent back to Carlisle, whither his two pals had preceded him.

After a long trial, the three men were found guilty, and executed on February 8, '86.

The behaviour of some ladies in the county of Cumberland, who, after the men were condemned to death, made heroes of them, and sent flowers and fruit to the gaol, to mark their appreciation of one of the most brutal murders ever committed, did not, in my humble opinion, redound to their credit. I was that year Chairman of the Board of Managers of the Metropolitan and City Police Orphanage, which institution, as the name indicates, is only for the orphans of the two forces; but, feeling sure I

JIMMY AND HIS "WIFE"

should carry the members with me, I moved the suspension of the standing orders, and Byrnes's little boy was admitted.

Before being taken from the cell to the scaffold, it is customary for the Governor of the gaol, or the Chaplain, to ask men on the very brink of eternity if they wish to make any statement. Martin and Rudge, on the question being put, both said the fourth man was not a member of the gang, that he had simply joined them on the road from Longtown. Baker said he died innocent—having previously admitted his guilt—and freely forgave all that had given false evidence against him.

It has often astonished me that notice should be taken, either by the Press or public, or credence given to statements made by such men, who even with the rope round their necks lie pertinaciously to the end.

About ten days after the execution Jimmy Smith's "wife" presented herself at my office, and asked if the fourth man in the Netherby burglary was wanted. "Certainly he is," was my reply. "I'll teach him," she said, "to take up with another woman before he is much older. Send up to Beak Street, Regent Street; you'll find him there at two o'clock this afternoon." I thought the information would be correct—it generally is from a jealous woman—and resolved to act on it. The information was correct, and the redoubtable Jimmy, who

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made no resistance, was in my office, with a detective on each side of him, before 2.30.

I then wired to Carlisle details of the capture, and told them to send a couple of men to take him North. "Man not wanted—am writing," was the reply I got. Putting Jimmy safely under lock and key, I waited for the letter, and a surprising letter it was. Practically it amounted to this: Three men had been hanged, and Cumberland was satisfied; and one of the injured constables being still in a precarious condition, the surgeon would not take the responsibility of bringing the fourth man to his bedside for identification. There was nothing for it but to let Jimmy go, and, to his unbounded astonishment, he was set at liberty.

Twenty years' penal servitude, looking to his antecedents, would not have been one day too much for him.

The July following, Sergeant Rolf was at Wood Green Races, and, meeting Jimmy, asked him to have a drink. Adjourning to a booth, they were having a talk of old times over a glass of gin-and-water, when they were joined by a third man, whom Rolf introduced as a "friend of mine." Presently Rolf's friend, having finished his drink, left. "Who's that?" said Jimmy. "He seems a decent sort of chap." "Oh, he's decent enough," replied Rolf. "That's Berry, the hangman." Jimmy's feelings were sorely hurt, and in very forcible language he intimated that, had he known the profession of

HANGMEN'S ROPES—AND HORSESHOES

the gentleman to whom he had been introduced, he would have declined to partake of refreshment in his company.

Jimmy shortly afterwards mysteriously disappeared, and what became of him I never could discover.

Fenton's Hotel about this period was an uncommonly comfortable place, much frequented by those of high degree. A week before the execution at Carlisle I had a letter from a man who always made it his headquarters, and who had seen that an execution was impending, asking me, as a very great favour, to get him a piece of the rope which had facilitated the progress of one of the culprits to the next world. I communicated with Berry, then professionally engaged in London, and got a promise from him that he would cut off a foot from Martin's rope and send it to me. When it arrived, I took it to Fenton's myself, and was warmly thanked for it. I asked my friend what value he attached to it. He told me he was shortly going out to Vienna, near which gay city lived a Princess from whom he had received great kindness, and at whose house he had often stayed; and that as a horseshoe fixed above an entrance-hall in this country was supposed to avert misfortune from the house, so in like manner a piece of rope which had hanged a man, if laid in a lady's boudoir, was supposed in Austria to bring luck and ward off all danger from the inmate. I hope the rope answered

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

its purpose, but from that day to this I have never met my friend nor heard how the Princess fared.

Of course, Mr. Berry may have sold me altogether; but seeing he was a personal friend, and brought Mrs. Berry to my office to introduce her to me, the odds are that the piece of rope was really what it purported to be.

In the *Contemporary Review* of January, 1910, there is an article entitled "Automatic Writing," by J. Arthur Hill, in which the author gives us some details of the planchette, and how it works, and concludes by saying: "Automatic writing is neither dangerous nor harmful for well-balanced minds; but it is best left alone by the physically weak, and by the very emotional, credulous, and impressionable"—a most sensible warning and conclusion to an instructive and well-written article. It recalls the days of table-turning, when tables would not move for some, but certainly did move for others. To bring forth any results, either with tables or the planchette, people apparently must have the proper constitution. All this my readers may possibly deem the most unpardonable digression of which I have been guilty; but no—it is eminently pertinent to the story I have just been telling.

Lady Mabel Howard, of Greystoke, Westmorland—if my memory serves me right—sat out the whole long trial of Martin Rudge and Baker from start to finish. Lady Graham's jewels, stolen from Netherby, were thrown by the burglars, when

CONCERNING THE PLANCHETTE

making their way South, into the river under the bridge at Tebay. I know the bridge well and the very spot where the jewels were found. Mr. Hill tells us that Lady Mabel, who wrote automatically, was asked by her friends to try to discover the lost property, and she wrote: "In the river, under the bridge at Tebay." Even while remembering that no thought-reader or hypnotist has ever succeeded in capturing a bank-note by telling its number, it almost looks—to quote Mr. Hill again—as if we were "on the eve of great things in this [the planchette] department of science."

Before closing this chapter I would advert to the fact of Lady Graham's door being "locked from the inside"; but it did not come out in evidence whether or not the key was left in the lock.

A good deal more is known now in this country of locks and how to open them than was known in those days. In America they were always a little in front of us. I remember well a very smart young American who got five years at the Old Bailey for burglary in '87. He was not one of your vulgar ruffians, ready to boast he could do "that little lot on his 'ead," but quite a nice, quiet fellow—a little nervous (for he had a wife) as to what sentence he would get. When told by one of my men that five years was almost sure to be his portion, "Not ten?" he asked anxiously. "I don't mind five a bit." He got five, and was thoroughly

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contented and grateful, he said, for the kindness the police had shown him. Not satisfied with that, before he donned the variegated suit he presented me with a souvenir in the shape of a little pair of tweezers—small enough to go into the waistcoat pocket—and told me how to use them. I very soon put them to the test. My rooms at Cloak Lane Station were entered by a heavy door—more like a church door than anything else. I called the inspector out of the office, told him to go inside and lock me out. Inserting the tweezers, which had roughened edges, I caught the end of the key, turned it as easily as if I had been opening the door in the legitimate way, and was inside in a few seconds, very much to his astonishment.

XV

WHAT DISOBEDIENCE OF ORDERS LED TO

THE story of Barbara, so beautifully told by Miss Braddon, opens in South Lane, Camberwell. It has, I am not ashamed to say, drawn many tears—and they are hard to draw—from my eyes. The following tale, I hardly think, will draw tears from the eyes of my readers, but I will endeavour to make it interesting. It is certainly instructive, showing, as it does, how men, just to have a “fling,” to have the command of money for ten days or a fortnight, to pose before innocent and confiding girls as men of means, will commit serious crimes, sure to be discovered almost as soon as committed, and sure to bring condign punishment on them. The ostrich hopes to baffle his pursuers by thrusting his beak into the sand; the criminal of my tale seems from first to last to have had no hope of baffling his pursuers. From the day he bolted to Camberwell from the City—not much of a bolt—he lived in daily, I may say hourly, dread of arrest. “From information received,” I applied for a warrant, and one summer

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afternoon a detective-inspector—let us call him Thomson—went across to effect his capture.

Camberwell when Miss Braddon's story opens was a very different place from what it is now. Many of the houses, more particularly those in South Lane, had extensive gardens; and, like the one Barbara lived in with her mother, were approached by pretty little avenues, with a lodge at the entrance-gate. The house my detective officer made for was a wretched place of some four or five small rooms and a back-yard, in which stood a tumble-down wooden shed, tenanted by ten or a dozen consumptive-looking chickens. The man wanted had a young wife, to whom he had been married only a few months, and whom he had to take into his confidence when she asked him why they had left the City so hurriedly and why he never crossed the door in daylight. From the hour he made a clean breast of it to her she shared all his fears, and the sword of Damocles hung over both—every knock at the door terrified them. Detective officers often find themselves in awkward and dangerous positions, and had my inspector been lynched in Camberwell, he would only have had himself to blame. My orders were that no man should ever follow a criminal out of the City alone. Wishing probably to have all the credit of the capture to himself, Thomson disobeyed my orders and took no one with him. Walking quietly up to the house, he knocked, and the wife

DISOBEDIENCE OF ORDERS

appeared at the door. Instinct apparently told her husband that "The hour's come and the man," and rushing past her and the Inspector, he made for the old shed in the yard, and just managed to pull the door to and bolt it with the officer close on his heels. Thomson threw himself against the door with all his force and burst it open, to find himself firmly clasped by the criminal, who had cut his throat from ear to ear. Throwing his arms round him, the suicide, on the verge of death, exclaimed: "Pray with me—for Christ's sake pray with me!" With great difficulty Thomson disengaged himself, and without realizing the danger—he was literally smothered in blood from his neck to his knees—opened the front door, intending to send someone for a surgeon. Crowds collect quickly in the streets of London, and almost as soon as he had appeared the storm threatened to break. Providentially, a constable of the Metropolitan Force was passing, who, suspecting murder had been committed, was going to take the Inspector into custody. Thomson hurriedly told him what had happened, showed him his warrant card, and implored him to stand by him. "Get back into the house," said the constable; "I will explain to the crowd how you come to be covered with blood, and get someone to run for a surgeon." The wretched young wife meantime had fallen senseless by the side of her husband's corpse.

The ghastly tragedy, from start to finish, did not

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

occupy five minutes, but it was long enough to shake the nerve of the Inspector, not easily shaken. He took a cab home, and after changing his gory garments, made his appearance at the Old Jewry—shaking, as an Irish recruit said, “like an ash plant leaf.” He expected sympathy, but all he got was a warning that if he disobeyed orders again there would be a vacancy for an inspector in the Detective Department.

XVI

OF THE RIPPER AND HIS DEEDS—AND OF THE
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR, SIR ROBERT
ANDERSON

THE excitement caused by the “ripper” murders it would be difficult to exaggerate, and the suggestions made by amateur detectives, and the abuse of the police in connection therewith, would have driven a sensitive man into the Earlswood Asylum.

There is no man living who knows as much of those murders as I do ; and before going farther I must admit that, though within five minutes of the perpetrator one night, and with a very fair description of him besides, he completely beat me and every police officer in London ; and I have no more idea now where he lived than I had twenty years ago.

None of the murders, I ought to explain, were committed within the City, bar one, that in Mitre Square. All the others were just outside the City boundary, in Whitechapel and Spitalfields. The coincidences in connection with the tragedies no one would credit. After the second crime I sent

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word to Sir Charles Warren that I had discovered a man very likely to be the man wanted. He certainly had all the qualifications requisite. He had been a medical student; he had been in a lunatic asylum; he spent all his time with women of loose character, whom he bilked by giving them polished farthings instead of sovereigns, two of these farthings having been found in the pocket of the murdered woman. Sir Charles failed to find him. I thought he was likely to be in Rupert Street, Haymarket. I sent up two men, and there he was; but, polished farthings and all, he proved an alibi without the shadow of doubt.

In August, 1888, when I was desperately keen to lay my hands on the murderer, I made such arrangements as I thought would insure success. I put nearly a third of the force into plain clothes, with instructions to do everything which, under ordinary circumstances, a constable should not do. It was subversive of discipline; but I had them well supervised by senior officers. The weather was lovely, and I have little doubt they thoroughly enjoyed themselves, sitting on door-steps, smoking their pipes, hanging about public-houses, and gossiping with all and sundry. In addition to this, I visited every butcher's shop in the city, and every nook and corner which might, by any possibility, be the murderer's place of concealment. Did he live close to the scene of action? or did he, after

THE ELUSIVE RIPPER

committing a murder, make his way with lightning speed to some retreat in the suburbs? Did he carry something with him to wipe the blood from his hands, or did he find means of washing them? were questions I asked myself nearly every hour of the day. It seemed impossible he could be living in the very midst of us; and, seeing the Metropolitan Police had orders to stop every man walking or driving late at night or in the early morning, till he gave a satisfactory account of himself, more impossible still that he could gain Leytonstone, Highgate, Finchley, Fulham, or any suburban district without being arrested. The murderer very soon showed his contempt for my elaborate arrangements. The excitement had toned down a little, and I was beginning to think he had either gone abroad or retired from business, when "Two more women murdered in the East!" raised the excitement again to concert pitch.

The night of Saturday, September 29, found me tossing about in my bed at Cloak Lane Station, close to the river and adjoining Southwark Bridge. There was a railway goods depot in front, and a furrier's premises behind my rooms; the lane was causewayed, heavy vans were going constantly in and out, and the sickening smell from the furrier's skins was always present. You could not open the windows, and to sleep was an impossibility. Suddenly the bell at my head rang violently. "What is it?" I asked, putting my ear to the tube.

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“Another murder, sir, this time in the City.” Jumping up, I was dressed and in the street in a couple of minutes. A hansom—to me a detestable vehicle—was at the door, and into it I jumped, as time was of the utmost consequence. This invention of the devil claims to be safe. It is neither safe nor pleasant. In winter you are frozen; in summer you are broiled. When the glass is let down your hat is generally smashed, your fingers caught between the doors, or half your front teeth loosened. Licensed to carry two, it did not take me long to discover that a 15-stone Superintendent inside with me, and three detectives hanging on behind, added neither to its comfort nor to its safety.

Although we rolled like a “seventy-four” in a gale, we got to our destination—Mitre Square—without an upset, where I found a small group of my men standing round the mutilated remains of a woman.

It was in Berners Street, a narrow thoroughfare off the Commercial Road leading to the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway, that Elizabeth Stride, the first of the two victims that night, met her fate. The street is entered by a large wooden gate, folding back in the middle, and almost always left open, and it is conjectured that the murderer took the woman in, closing the gate behind him. At 12.40 a.m., as far as could be made out from the evidence of the inmates, the street was vacant.

STILL ELUSIVE

Within five minutes of that time a man who had been out late opened the gate. He was driving a pony-trap. The pony shied at something behind the gate, and looking down he saw the body of a woman, and instantly gave the alarm. The woman was seriously injured about the head, and must have been thrown down with great violence, and her throat was cut from ear to ear. Not a sound was heard by anyone. No doubt she was rendered insensible by the fall. The assassin must have slipped past the off-side of the pony, and—as there were civilians and some men of the H Division close at hand—escaped by a very hair's-breadth: an experience sufficient, one would have thought, to shake his nerve for that night. But no, either because he was dissatisfied with his work, or furious at having been interrupted before he could finish it, he determined to show that he was still without a rival as a slaughterer, and, walking straight up to Houndsditch, he met Catharine Eddowes,* and finished his second victim within the hour. The approaches to Mitre Square are three—by Mitre Street, Duke Street, and St. James's Place. In the south-western corner, to which there is no approach, lay the woman. I was convinced then, and am convinced now, that had my orders been carried out in the spirit—they may have been to the letter—the reign of terror would have ceased

* This woman was in my custody at Bishopsgate Police Station twenty minutes before she was murdered.

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

that night. The orders were to account for every man and woman seen together. It may be that the man and woman, having made an appointment, went separately and met in the Square. That does not exonerate the officers of the City Police. On hundreds of occasions I have defended them and stood up for them when unjustly accused of neglect or excess of duty; but that is not, as Shaver Quackenboss used to say, my "platform" now. The "beat" of Catharine Eddowes was a small one. She was known to a good many of the constables, but, known or not known, she was in the streets late at night, and must have been seen making for Mitre Square. With what object? In pursuance, it is needless to say, of her miserable calling. Had she been followed, and men called to guard the approaches, the murderer would to a certainty have been taken red-handed. The Square, every inch of it, was carefully examined, but not one mark or drop of blood did we discover to indicate by what approach he had made his exit.

By this time a stretcher had arrived, and when we got the body to the mortuary, the first discovery we made was that about one-half of the apron was missing. It had been severed by a clean cut. My men, thoroughly awake at last, were scouring the whole neighbourhood, and one of them, Halse by name, who had been with us in Mitre Square, thinking he had a better chance down Whitechapel way, ran at his best pace in that direction. Goulston

“MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN”

Street, Whitechapel, is a broad thoroughfare running parallel with the Commercial Road, just one-third of a mile from the Square, and in that street, at the door of one of the model workmen's dwellings erected by Peabody, he saw a light, and, halting, found a constable of the Metropolitan Force looking at the missing piece of apron. It was folded up, and immediately above, on the wall, written in chalk, were the words, "The Jews are the men that won't be blamed for nothing." It was thus proved beyond doubt that the murderer, on that evening at any rate, made, in the first instance, for Whitechapel. Sir Charles Warren was instantly apprised of this discovery, and, coming down himself, ordered the words to be wiped out, alleging as his reason for so doing that he feared a rising against the Jews. This was, I thought, a fatal mistake, as Superintendent MacWilliam plainly told Sir Charles when he called about seven o'clock, accompanied by Superintendent Arnold. It is just possible the words, if photographed, might have afforded an important clue. The assassin had evidently wiped his hands with the piece of apron. In Dorset Street, with extraordinary audacity, he washed them at a sink up a close, not more than six yards from the street. I arrived there in time to see the blood-stained water. I wandered round my station-houses, hoping I might find someone brought in, and finally got to bed at 6 a.m., after a very harassing night, completely defeated. The re-

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volting details of this murder would shock my readers ; but there are certain facts—gruesome enough in all conscience—which have never appeared in print, and which, from a medical and scientific point of view, should certainly be put on record.

When the body was examined by the police surgeon, Mr. Gordon Brown, one kidney was found to be missing, and some days after the murder what purported to be that kidney was posted to the office of the Central News, together with a short note of rather a jocular character unfit for publication. Both kidney and note the manager at once forwarded to me. Unfortunately, as always happens, some clerk or assistant in the office was got at, and the whole affair was public property next morning. Right royally did the Solons of the metropolis enjoy themselves at the expense of my humble self and the City Police Force. “The kidney was the kidney of a dog, anyone could see that,” wrote one. “Evidently from the dissecting-room,” wrote another. “Taken out of a corpse after a post-mortem,” wrote a third. “A transparent hoax,” wrote a fourth. My readers shall judge between myself and the Solons in question.

I made over the kidney to the police surgeon, instructing him to consult with the most eminent men in the profession, and send me a report without delay. I give the substance of it. The renal artery is about three inches long. Two inches remained in the corpse, one inch was attached to the kidney.

OF KIDNEYS, NOT DEVILLED

The kidney left in the corpse was in an advanced stage of Bright's Disease; the kidney sent me was in an exactly similar state. But what was of far more importance, Mr. Sutton, one of the senior surgeons of the London Hospital, whom Gordon Brown asked to meet him and another practitioner in consultation, and who was one of the greatest authorities living on the kidney and its diseases, said he would pledge his reputation that the kidney submitted to them had been put in spirits within a few hours of its removal from the body—thus effectually disposing of all hoaxes in connection with it. The body of anyone done to death by violence is not taken direct to the dissecting-room, but must await an inquest, never held before the following day at the soonest.

The Ripper certainly had all the luck. Three or four days after the murder in Mitre Square, a letter addressed to me by name—and for which I, or rather the Corporation, had to pay twopence sterling—was delivered at my office. The writer was complimentary to myself personally. He said he was anxious to see me, as he had a lot to tell me about the murders; that he was not afraid to meet me, but that he was on ticket of leave, and hadn't reported himself, and that if he came to the Old Jewry the "tecs"—of whom he evidently had a very low opinion—would apprehend him, and send him back to work out the remainder of his sentence; that he was living on the earnings of his

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

wife, who, by the kindness of the missionary, had got a laundry and was doing well ; that if I wanted to write to him, a letter addressed to a certain place in Hoxton—a large, and, generally speaking, disreputable district—to be left till called for, would find him.

Besides being a convict, the writer was evidently an ex-soldier. “ You’re not on the right scent at all,” he said ; “ the man you want is not in London, he’s in Manchester. What you think is his writing isn’t. He writes just like an orderly-room clerk.” (A facsimile of the writing of the purloiner of the kidney—whence obtained I know not—had appeared in an evening paper.) Sir James Fraser, who had been on leave for two months, came back to work next day, and I instantly laid the letter before him. “ You have had all the bother over this business,” he said ; “ do as you like. Consult MacWilliam ; but, take my advice, no one else.”

There were two courses open to me : to watch the house in Hoxton, and apprehend anyone or everyone who called, or to trust the man who trusted me. I chose the latter. I wrote, making an appointment with him for 10 p.m. in one of the quietest squares in the West End ; assured him I would be alone, and that not one detective would accompany me from the Old Jewry. I told him to stand under the lamp at the north-west end of the gardens and wait for me. Shortly before the hour named I took up my position on the pavement oppo-

THE RIPPER AS I MET HIM

site. Punctual almost to the minute I saw a man advance from the north, and halt under the lamp. Crossing the road at once, I walked quickly up to him and looked him over steadily. The man confronting me could not have been more than five feet two or three inches in height. He was stoutly built, black-bearded, and of an ugly and forbidding countenance. "Have you come to meet anyone, my man?" I said. "No, I haven't," he replied, in a civil enough tone. "Well, I have," I said, "and I mean to wait a bit longer to see if he keeps his appointment." To turn your back on a gentleman is indicative of bad manners; but I thought this gentleman might, like Callum Beg, have a "skene occe," or some such weapon about him with which he might "kittle" my "quarters" if he got the chance, so, like the Court officials at Buckingham Palace in presence of Royalty, I retreated back foremost till I got to my original position. There we stood facing one another for five or six minutes, when the man turned and walked leisurely away. If the letter I received was written by a soldier, as I think it must have been, this man could not have written it, for he was well under the standard for any branch of the service.

After the meeting in the West-End square, I had a short note from my short friend. "Now," he said, "I know I can trust you, I'll be at the Old Jewry as soon as I can." I had also a letter from the missioner, in which he told me that the

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

man I had met had “some very startling revelations to make.”

I waited patiently for the promised visit, and confidently for a further communication from the missionary. The man never came, nor was I able to get the missionary's handwriting identified. Had either of them asked for money, I would have sent it willingly, believing, as I did, that at last I was on the right scent; but I never had any such application from either.

To return to Mitre Square and the night of the murder.

At the exit leading direct to Goulston Street, opposite the corner where the murder was committed, there was a club, the members of which were nearly all foreigners. One, a sort of hybrid German, was leaving the club—he was unable to fix the hour—when he noticed a man and woman standing close together. The woman had her hand resting on the man's chest. It was bright moonlight, almost as light as day, and he saw them distinctly. This was, without doubt, the murderer and his victim. The inquiries I made at Berners Street, the evidence of the constable in whose beat the square was, and my own movements, of which I had kept careful notes, proved this conclusively. The description of the man given me by the German was as follows: Young, about the middle height, with a small fair moustache, dressed in something like navy serge, and with a deerstalker's

JACK THE RIPPER

cap—that is, a cap with a peak both fore and aft. I think the German spoke the truth, because I could not “lead” him in any way. “You will easily recognize him, then,” I said. “Oh no!” he replied; “I only had a short look at him.” The German was a strange mixture, honest apparently, and intelligent also. He “had heard of some murders,” he said, but they didn’t seem to concern him.

Yes, the Ripper had all the luck.

Since this chapter was written my attention has been drawn to an article in *Blackwood's Magazine*, of March this year—the sixth of a series by Sir Robert Anderson—entitled “The Lighter Side of my Official Life.” In this article Sir Robert discourses on the Whitechapel, or Jack the Ripper, murders, and states emphatically that he, the criminal, “was living in the immediate vicinity of the scenes of the murders, and that, if he was not living absolutely alone, his people knew of his guilt and refused to give him up to justice. The conclusion,” Sir Robert adds, “we came to was that he and his people were low-class Jews, for it is a remarkable fact that people of that class in the East End will not give up one of their number to Gentile justice, and the result proved that our diagnosis was right on every point.”

Sir Robert does not tell us how many of “his people” sheltered the murderer, but whether they were two dozen in number, or two hundred, or two

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

thousand, he accuses them of being accessories to these crimes before and after their committal.

Surely Sir Robert cannot believe that while the Jews, as he asserts, were entering into this conspiracy to defeat the ends of justice, there was no one among them with sufficient knowledge of the criminal law to warn them of the risks they were running.*

Sir Robert talks of the "Lighter Side" of his "Official Life." There is nothing "light" here; a heavier indictment could not be framed against a class whose conduct contrasts most favourably with that of the Gentile population of the Metropolis.

In the early morning of September 30, 1888, Sir Robert Anderson being in Paris, "two more victims"—to use his own words—fell to the knife of the murder fiend, the second victim being Catharine Eddowes, killed in Mitre Square. This was the only crime of the series committed within the jurisdiction of Sir James Fraser, and he being in Scotland, I was in command of the City Police. Inasmuch as two women met their fate on September 30, and it was discovered which way the Ripper walked or ran after the second crime, and how he wiped his hands to get rid of the

* In murder cases accessories after the fact—according to "Stephen's Digest," an absolutely reliable work on criminal law—are liable to penal servitude for life; and thus the Jews in the East End, against whom Sir Robert Anderson made his reckless accusation, come under that category.

SIR CHARLES AND SIR ROBERT

blood-stains, that morning is far the most eventful connected with the "reign of terror."

How Sir Charles Warren wiped out—I believe with his own hand, but will not speak positively—the writing on the wall, how he came to my office accompanied by Superintendent Arnold about seven o'clock the same morning to get information as to the murder of Catharine Eddowes, I have already stated on p. 153. The facts are indisputable, yet Sir Robert Anderson studiously avoids all allusion to them. Is it because "it would ill become him to violate the unwritten rule of the service," or is he unwilling to put on record the unpardonable blunder of his superior officer? I leave my readers to decide.

Sir Robert says "the Ripper could go and come and get rid of his blood-stains in secret." The criminal, no doubt, was valeted by his co-religionists—warned not to run too great risks, to come home as soon as he could after business, and always to give notice when he meant to cut up another lady! On three occasions—the only three of which I can give reliable details—there was no need to provide the murderer with hot water and Sunlight soap. In Berners Street he did not mutilate the woman, and probably had very few blood-stains about him; in Mitre Square he used the woman's apron; and in Dorset Street he carefully washed his hands at the sink.

The writing on the wall may have been written

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

—and, I think, probably *was* written—to throw the police off the scent, to divert suspicion from the Gentiles and throw it upon the Jews. It may have been written by the murderer, or it may not. To obliterate the words that might have given us a most valuable clue, more especially after I had sent a man to stand over them till they were photographed, was not only indiscreet, but unwarrantable.

Sir Robert Anderson spent, so he tells us, the day of his return from abroad and half the following night “in reinvestigating the whole case.” A more fruitless investigation, looking to all he tells us, it would be difficult to imagine.

The “lighter side,” we learn, is ‘to be continued.’ Meantime, if Sir Robert can spare a few minutes, there are two books, I think, well worthy of his perusal—“Bleak House” and the Bible. In the former book Mademoiselle Hortense, to divert suspicion from herself, writes “Lady Deadlock, Murderess”—with what result Inspector Bucket tells us. In the latter, Daniel interprets the writing on the wall which brought things to a crisis at Belshazzar’s Feast. Sir Robert is fortunate to live in times like the present. Mr. Blackwood’s readers seem pleased with his tales, but I fear the King of the Chaldeans would have made short work of him.

XVII

CONCERNING HOP - PICKERS AND REVOLVERS —
“ ALLEYBIS ”—POLICE PASSES—PUGILISTS, AND
THE NOBLE ART OF SELF-DEFENCE

THE murder of Mrs. Luard and the suicide of her husband I would not allude to—the tragedies are altogether too sad—were it not for two theories advanced, or I might go further and say assertions made, which, from past experience, I can refute. Mrs. Luard was found with two wounds, apparently revolver-shots, either of which was sufficient to cause death. Had she taken her own life, it is quite impossible, so it was contended, that after firing one shot she could have fired another.

During the hunt for the murderer, residents in the neighbourhood, strangers from a distance, gipsies, if I recollect aright, and hop-pickers, all came under suspicion.

The second contention or assertion was that it was very unlikely a hop-picker would be in possession of a revolver.

My experience was as follows :

One beautiful summer afternoon, during the

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

reign of that fine old crusted Lord Mayor, Sir Robert Fowler, I took a country cousin of the gentler sex to St. Paul's. We sat very far forward, close under the pulpit. The service, always beautiful, proceeded as usual, and the Canon had just commenced his sermon when a terrific explosion was heard reverberating through and through the Cathedral. "Dynamite," I whispered; "sit still, and show a good example." The words were scarcely out of my mouth when another explosion, precisely similar, followed, within, I should say, three or four seconds. With another whispered word of advice I rose and left her, and made my way towards the west door.

[The great door of the cathedral opens *inwards*; and I always had fifteen or twenty men on duty to stem the rush should there be a panic. When the panic comes and the corpses are thick on the ground, the Dean and Chapter may probably give me credit for the urgent remonstrances I have addressed to them.]

In one of the seats, not far from the west door, lay a man, and, sitting beside him, too terrified to move, was a little girl, daughter of one of my constables. The suicide came in late, sat down beside her, and took a revolver from his pocket. She saw him fire one shot, and then another, into his chest. The first was quite sufficient to kill him, but he still had life enough left to fire the second.

Curious to say, the first man to join me as I

OF HOP-PICKERS AND DRINK-WINNERS

stood over the body was Vivian Majendie, H.M. Chief Inspector of Explosives, and very opportune his arrival was. I took up the revolver from the floor, on which it had fallen, and adjourned with Majendie to a recess by the south door, whither some of the police had preceded us with the corpse. The man was stone-dead.

As to the second contention, that it is unlikely that a hop-picker should be in possession of a revolver, Bangor Street, Notting Dale, whose distinguishing letter in the Postal Guide is the aristocratic "W.," is inhabited almost entirely by hop-pickers, and is one of the worst and most dangerous streets in London. There are respectable hop-pickers, I know, but they don't live there. To be seen at its best, Bangor Street should be visited about the end of September, when the men return from the "hopping"—the only work they condescend to do in the year. At the beginning of the month, when I last walked through it, women and vermin had the place to themselves. Formerly, the "wives" used to accompany their husbands to the hop-fields of Kent or Sussex; now most of them prefer to remain at home and bask in the sun on the pavement like the curs of Constantinople. When the drink-winners return, they are received with open arms. Every shilling they have earned is gone in a week. Then the inmates of Bangor Street, male and female, turn lightly to thoughts of crime. I have known men who lived

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

in this street, and seen them hanged, too. They habitually carried revolvers.

Mr. Weller senior, Sammy's papa, had a great fancy for the "alleybi." I am not such an admirer of that line of defence as the "old un," for I have kicked the bottom out of a good many alibis myself. But thereby hangs a tale. In the year 1891 a lady was tried at the Old Bailey. Seeing that she, her husband, and almost everyone connected with the case, are still alive, I refrain from mentioning names; suffice it to say that she was found guilty, confessed her guilt, and received the ridiculously lenient sentence—looking to the serious crimes she had committed—of nine months' imprisonment. This woman, who gave me more trouble than any criminal I ever had anything to do with, was at home at a certain hour on a certain morning. She was in Lombard Street in an inconceivably short time thereafter. What time she took I cannot now remember, but that she was at home and in Lombard Street as stated was proved conclusively. Wishing to satisfy myself that the distance could be covered within the time, and thinking that an alibi might possibly be the defence, I instructed three plain-clothes men to start at the spot where she started, and beat her time if they could, arranging with the police on duty in the streets to facilitate their progress. One chartered the fleetest of hansoms, and, urging the driver to do his best, drove the whole way.

OF "ALLEYBIS" AND "POLICE PASSES"

Another started in a hansom, changed to the underground railway, and finished in a hansom. The third did the journey by express bus early in the morning, and also late in the evening, when the streets were less congested than at the hour she made her momentous journey. Not one of the three accomplished it in the time she did.

A "police pass," let me explain to the uninitiated, means a pass enabling the bearer to do what the general public are not allowed to do—to pass the barriers, and go where he likes, either on foot or in his carriage. One day, about ten years ago, I received a letter from a great dignitary of the Church telling me he had obtained a pass from Sir Edward Bradford, enabling him to reach the Mansion House at a certain hour, and asking me to supplement Sir Edward's pass by a similar one through the City. The letter, putting it mildly, was incorrect. I was positive that Bradford would never issue such a pass, and drove up to see him there-anent. The last straw it is that breaks the camel's back, and this straw broke Bradford's. "I am sick of all this," he said. "When I am at my very busiest, Edwards" (his secretary) "brings me in four or five dozen to sign. Let us refuse them to everyone—on this occasion, at any rate—and see how it works." The bargain was struck. I went back to my office, wrote a note to the ecclesiastic, telling him plainly but very politely that I had been to Scotland Yard; that Sir Edward Bradford had not,

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

as he asserted, issued any pass in his favour, and that I declined to do so; told my clerk that I meant to refuse every application from Press and public alike, and awaited developments.

The first request, as I expected, came from a fair lady-in-waiting, who for ten or a dozen years had bothered me sorely. She asked if I would, with my "usual kindness," send her a pass to enable her carriage to get to Lombard Street after vehicular traffic was stopped, and no doubt she was much surprised to get a refusal. For various reasons, I must admit it afforded me a good deal of satisfaction to express my great regret that I could not oblige her, and to sign myself, "Yours most sincerely, HENRY SMITH."

Some people cannot bear to be "scored off." I am not one of the number, and can laugh at a joke at my own expense quite as well as at anyone else's, and the way the fair one "did" me on this occasion was so very pretty that I complimented her on it the next time we met.

Vehicular traffic was stopped that day at Mansion House Station at 2.30. About three o'clock the lady drove up, holding in her hand my letter, adroitly folded, with only "Henry Smith" visible. Instantly her horses' heads were taken hold of. "Can't allow your carriage to proceed any farther, madam," said the inspector. "Not allow my carriage to pass!" she said indignantly. "You must surely recognize your own Commissioner's

“ NEVER WRITE LETTERS ”

signature.” “ Beg your pardon, madam,” said the puzzled inspector ; “ I was not informed that Sir Henry had sent you a pass ; ” and gaily the lady drove to her destination, excellently well pleased with herself. While complimenting her, I intimated that in future any communication between us must necessarily be verbal.

The occurrence reminded me of the advice given by Commissioner Kerr, one of the very ablest men I ever met, to a young fellow named Howard, whom I knew well. Howard refused to pay a tradesman’s bill on the ground that it was exorbitant. The man sued him, and the case was heard before Kerr. Kerr was unerring in his decisions, which he arrived at with extraordinary rapidity, and without hesitation gave his verdict for the defendant. Howard’s letter refusing to pay had been couched in most intemperate language, and, while recognizing the justice of his cause, Kerr thought it as well to caution him against a repetition of his imprudence. “ Did you write that letter, Mr. Howard ? ” asked Kerr. “ I did, sir,” was the reply. “ Never,” said the old Commissioner, shaking his grey head—“ never write letters, Mr. Howard.”

Jim Burn’s, a fighting house in Air Street, Piccadilly, where the “ noble art of self-defence ” was taught by Young Reid, was in the year ’57 a favourite resort of mine. I was introduced to the establishment by a solicitor’s clerk in Gray’s Inn.

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

A more rapid youth never bestrode a three-legged stool. Reid was a very little fellow—fighting weight under nine stone—quiet and respectable; but, like Alan Breck, he was a “bonny fighter.” He never degenerated into a bully, as many pugilists did—the redoubtable Tom Sayers, I am sorry to say, among the number. Reid gave lessons on the first-floor at the Rising Sun, but in the evening, before his pupils arrived, he was generally to be found downstairs in the bar. We have it on the authority of the Bishop of London that the barmaids of the Metropolis leave nothing to be desired as far as character is concerned, and that the way they resist temptation is beyond all praise. How his lordship arrived at his conclusions he does not mention. The barmaid at Jim Burn’s in my day would have come up to his ideal. She was a very pretty and respectable girl, and it is greatly to Young Reid’s credit that he stood by her when he saw her in difficulties, and uniformly escorted her home after closing hours.

One evening when I went to have a lesson I found two great big Guardsmen—Grenadiers—tolerably drunk, and using very foul language. Reid asked them once or twice very civilly to desist. “You mind your own business, you little beggar,” said one of them, “or I’ll chuck you into the street and her after you!” The barmaid’s face was a study—not a trace of fear: perfect confidence in her little champion. “Oh no,” said Reid, getting

OF BISHOPS AND BARMAIDS

himself into position, with his right arm across his chest and his left ready for action, "you won't do that." The Guardsman did not hesitate one moment, but dealt a blow which would have felled an ox had it reached its destination. But that it never did. It was beautifully stopped. Out went Reid's left, and down went the big un deaf to the call of "Time." "He ain't no good, sir," said my preceptor, looking ruefully at his knuckles. "Come upstairs, sir;" and leaving the dead to bury their dead, up we went. I have seldom paid for a pint of Bass with more satisfaction than the pint consumed by the little pugilist that evening.

Not content with introducing me to Young Reid and the barmaid in Air Street, he of Gray's Inn took me over to Johnny Broome's, in the Borough, where I made the acquaintance of that celebrated prize-fighter and his wife. Johnny was a middle-weight — stones lighter than his brother Harry, who fought Harry Orme for the championship—but a better "bruiser" or a more scientific never entered the ring. His wife was even prettier than the lady of Air Street, and equally well-behaved and modest. What the young limb of the law whispered one evening as we were entering the house I well remember. "How much," he said, with a sigh, "I should like to make love to Mrs. Broome, and how little I should like Johnny to catch me!"

XVIII

ON THE ART OF MUTILATING

THE mutilation of dumb animals — that most revolting crime, common enough in Ireland—is happily almost unknown in Great Britain. In the year 1903 a series of outrages occurred at Great Wyrley, in Staffordshire. Horses were ripped up, sheep were killed, and cows met with the same fate. For these atrocious crimes a young Parsee named Edalji was tried and sentenced to seven years' penal servitude, but after serving three years he was released. The case was an extraordinary one from many points of view, and ended—like the Maybrick case—in a most unsatisfactory manner. I am glad to say I had nothing whatever to do with it. Another case, in which the miscreant was caught red-handed, will, I am sure, interest my readers.

The heroes of the following tale were a Cumberland squire and a detective-inspector whom we shall call respectively Mr. Lambert and George Miller. The squire, a man of great wealth, I knew very intimately. At his place in the North

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he bred horses and pigs, both the red "Tamworth" and the black "Berkshire"; but his particular hobby was "Polled Angus," of which he had some very fine specimens, and which he was in the habit of showing at local shows and at Islington also. One morning—how many years ago does not matter—Mr. Lambert called at my office in the Old Jewry. He told me that two young bulls and four heifers had been mutilated, or rather blemished and rendered unfit for showing, within a month; that there had been no cutting or cruelty, but that the case appeared one of wanton mischief, the whole hair of the tail in every instance having been stripped off, changing that caudal appendage from the tail of a beast to the tail of a rat. Mr. Lambert was very much put about, determined to discover the culprit, and asked me to let him have one of the best detective officers in the force to aid him. I explained to him that, as the crime, or mischief, or whatever it was, had not been committed in the City of London, I was unable to let him have a man from the force; but that I would get him a first-rate officer, who had only just earned his pension, and who, I had no doubt, would be delighted to undertake the job and go North with him.

Mr. Lambert came again to my office next morning, and in Miller's presence gave us full details of what had happened. I asked him if he knew of anyone about his place who had a grudge

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against him. "Not one soul," he replied. "I have always been good to my people, and I thought I was very popular. One man certainly, now that I think of it, is a curious character, and possibly might do me an ill turn. He is called the Softy. "Softies are often vicious," interposed Miller. "Have you done anything to rouse his enmity?" "Nothing at all, except that he asked me to give employment to his son, and I told him I had too many men already." "Where does this man live, sir—with the servants at the Hall?" "No; in the farmyard. When his wife died, a year ago, I gave him the only cottage there, and he has charge of the herd. He is always in charge also of any animals I show, and seems delighted and proud of them when they get prizes. I cannot believe he is the culprit." "One question more, sir. You say the yearling bull was the first to suffer. Was he mutilated before the Softy asked you to take his son, or after?" "After, certainly." "I'll account for that Softy the first thing I do," said Miller. "Is there any other breeder near you," I inquired, "who competes at the local shows?" "Yes," was the answer, "but he is above suspicion." I instructed Miller to account for this man also and for his servants, as I thought jealousy might be an important factor in the case; Mr. Lambert, a young breeder, comparatively speaking, having attained to eminence in one-fourth of the time his neighbour had.

ON THE ART OF MUTILATING

We then drew up a plan of campaign. Mr. Lambert was to go home immediately; Miller to follow him next day, personating a buyer from the South. In this character he would be able to walk about openly with the squire, inspect the herd in the field, taking stock of everyone and everything about the hall and the farmyard—the horses, the sheep, the pigs, the herd, and the Softy. I had stayed with Mr. Lambert myself, and, knowing the place, gave Miller some instructions before he left. The Hall stood very high, the farmyard about 200 yards below it—the descent being rather steep; and below the yard again—the descent still continuing—lay two large fields, about half the herd being in one, and about half in the other—some thirty animals all told. Miller, on his arrival in the afternoon, was given a sumptuous bedroom in the Hall, suitable to the moneyed buyer from the South; was introduced to the Softy, with whom he spent a considerable time; had a walk through the fields with Mr. Lambert, and then—as arranged—having a night on duty before him, went off to bed.

While in the yard he had noticed a loft which commanded the Softy's cottage, and decided on his *modus operandi*. It was in the end of June; the weather, luckily, was gloriously fine, and there was practically not an hour's darkness during the night. Miller, quite comfortable, and accustomed to watching, kept his eye on the cottage door. It remained closed till half-past four in the morning; then it

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opened, and the Softy emerged, stretched himself well, and turned up the hill towards the Hall. Miller instantly left his place of vantage, and made down the hill, taking up a position behind a hedge which would enable him to see anyone approaching the herd from above. There he remained till six o'clock, then made his way back to the yard, came upon the Softy engaged with his pigs, and heard from him—he having got the news from the shepherd at the Hall—that another beast had been mutilated in the night! Mr. Lambert, having come down early, at once sent for Miller, anxious to hear what had transpired. “Well, sir,” said Miller, “there may be more than one in this job, but I am perfectly positive the Softy himself had no hand in it last night.” All this, of course, I had from Miller on his return to London. The squire, a man charitably disposed towards everyone, although terribly annoyed at the recurrence of the mischief, was pleased that the Softy, so far, at any rate, had a “clean sheet.” “What do you propose doing now?” he asked Miller. “Watching the herd all night, sir, and taking the Softy into our confidence; and if you wouldn't mind sitting up late, you would be of great service.” On the upper side of the hedge I have already mentioned there was a deep ditch, and Miller explained that he meant in the morning to crawl up this ditch till he got to where the herd stood, and then, should he find the miscreant at work, to give three long whistles.

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The Softy was instructed, when he heard the whistle blown, to run as fast as he could down to the bottom of the right-hand field; while the Squire undertook—by aid of a pony, ready saddled and bridled, and reversed in his stall, like a horse of the Fire Brigade—to gallop down the avenue, and head him should he attempt to make off that way. Everything being satisfactorily arranged, Mr. Lambert betook himself to an arm-chair in the entrance hall, the Softy to his cottage, and Miller to his ditch.

Just about midnight the whistle was blown; and not half a minute after Miller heard the gallop of the pony down the avenue at break-neck speed. The Softy must have beat record time also; for Miller, although he could not actually see them meet, heard in a minute or two some animated talking. Running down the field a short way, he called loudly to them to come up. “Have you got him?” shouted Mr. Lambert. “Yes,” was the reply, and presently the pony and the panting Softy stood beside him. There was no human being in sight; only some of the herd and a donkey, also an inmate of the field. “Where is he?” said the Squire. “Danged if oi can see un,” said the Softy. Bewildered as the two were that night in the county of Cumberland, they were no more bewildered than I was in the City of London next day, when Miller got this length in his story. “What is the meaning of this?” I said. “You’ll

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find it simple enough, sir, if you will listen patiently for a few minutes ;” and then Miller continued his tale. “ When I got into the ditch, sir, I made my way up very quietly, looking every now and then through the hedge, and trying to keep all the herd in sight.

“ Just as I was getting near the top of the hill, I heard a peculiar sound—not loud ; in fact, it was barely audible. Cautiously raising my head, I saw one of the Squire’s favourites within seven or eight yards’ distance.

“ Behind it stood the donkey, with the tail of the beast in its mouth, which it was gradually stripping of every hair on it ; the operation was evidently rather pleasant than otherwise, for the bull—about the best of the lot—was standing perfectly still, just as a pig will do, sir, as long as you keep scratching him.

“ I was generally lucky with my cases, sir, as you know, and this was pure luck. If I hadn’t caught the donkey red-handed there is no saying how long Mr. Lambert would have been bothered.”

“ He was pleased with you, then,” I said. “ Uncommonly ; the idea that his own people, to whom he had always been kind, were ungrateful, troubled him, I really believe, far more than the mischief done to the herd.

“ I only wish,” concluded Miller, “ that the job had lasted a bit longer. That is a house to live in, sir · never was so comfortable in my life.”

XIX

LONDON HALF A CENTURY AGO

WHEN the capitals of England and Scotland were connected by rail, and for many years afterwards, return tickets were issued from London to Edinburgh, but not from Edinburgh to London; the authorities, wise in their generation, having decided that no passenger who had scraped together sufficient money to carry him from bleak Caledonia to Pall Mall, or the Poultry, would ever desire to return to the land of his nativity.

The great Metropolis exercises its "magnetic" influence; to old age it has its attractions; to youth it is irresistible. As Ouida says, of the Parisian capital, it winds its arms round the young like an octopus; it draws them into the maelstrom; they leave the green fields and the vineyards for the boulevards and the gilded salons; they leave their nearest and dearest; they never return.

Fifty years ago I knew the West End of London. With every "night-house" in the Haymarket and its neighbourhood I was familiar; with Kate Hamilton's; with Sally Sutherland's; with

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Rose Young's; and with that scoundrel of all scoundrels, Coney's.

Twenty-five years afterwards, I was as well acquainted with the East as with the West; with Newgate Street and Cornhill; with Bartholomew's and the London Hospital; with Whitechapel and Spitalfields; no part of the great Metropolis is unknown to me. Clapham Common and Richmond Park; Northwood and Pinner; Harrow and Wealdstone; Finchley and Hampstead; Barnet and Southgate; Ilford and Leytonstone; Epping Forest and Waltham Abbey—all these districts and many others I have walked, ridden, or driven over. All are as familiar to me as household words, save and except that district down by the marshes, so forcibly put before us in "Great Expectations." That district I know nothing of, and have never had time to penetrate and explore.

The Report of the Royal Commission upon the duties of the Metropolitan Police was issued in 1908. It proved to demonstration what every right-thinking man, I believe, hoped it would prove, that the 17,000 men (more or less) responsible for the safety of that enormous area under the Commissioner at Scotland Yard, are second to no body of men in the world. It failed to prove what no sane man, I hope, ever expected it to prove—that all the 17,000 are saints. Comparisons are odious; but had the Royal Commission suggested that among 17,000 solicitors, or 17,000 stockbrokers, or

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17,000 parsons, as many black sheep would be found as among the 17,000 officers of police, few, in my humble opinion, would have been found to cavil at the suggestion. The Commission was appointed, as the title-page indicates, to “report upon the duties of the Metropolitan Police”; and, having done that, it went no farther. It is, to my mind, subject for regret that the scope of the Commission was within such narrow limits. Many suggestions and recommendations might have emanated from the members, from which much good would have resulted.

Only one recommendation—as far as I can discover—did they make: that officers similar to Procurators-Fiscal in Scotland should be appointed to aid the police of the Metropolis in the prosecution and conviction of criminals.

No more thoroughly sound recommendation could have been made, although Sir Albert de Rutzen, Chief Police Magistrate, no less, was pleased, while under examination, to differ from the members of the Commission, and express a hope that Scotland would keep its Procurators-Fiscal to itself; showing himself to be most profoundly ignorant on a subject with which I am bold enough to say everyone of his subordinates was conversant.

I shall have more to say of the Royal Commission and of the C Division Metropolitan Police; of Sergeant Ballantyne, who knew the Division as well as most men; of the night-houses in the

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Haymarket; of the Argyll, the Holborn, and Mott's in Foley Street, Portland Place. Meantime, let men who remember those places decide for themselves whether the streets of London are safer now than they were then. To the casual observer they are, I admit. The flagrant annoying, importuning, and soliciting is a thing of the past; but the evil is there, and always will be there, as long as young men and young women exist. It was above the surface then; you knew the worst of it. It is below the surface now—a change, in my opinion, very much for the worse.

XX

OF COMMISSIONERS OF POLICE—OF THOSE WITH
THE “IRON HAND IN A VELVET GLOVE,” AND
THOSE WITHOUT — OF EQUESTRIANISM, AND
OF A SANGUINARY CONFLICT WITH DIFFICULTY
AVERTED

THE Metropolitan Police Force was established by Sir Robert Peel in 1829. Ten years afterwards, in 1839, the City of London Police Act was devised, drafted, and found its way to the Statute Book through the unaided exertions of Daniel Whittle Harvey. Harvey was a solicitor and a Member of the House of Commons, and, as a reward for his exertions, he was appointed to administer the Act in the City. By Clause VII. of that Act the Commissioner is debarred from holding a seat in the House, and thus the astute Government got quit of a dangerous political opponent. Harvey as an orator stood alone. How dangerous he was my readers will be able to judge when I tell them the following anecdote.

The Speaker — Brand — when asked “Who is the finest orator you ever heard in the House?”

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replied, without a moment's hesitation, "Daniel Whittle Harvey;" and those were the days of Gladstone and Bright.

Harvey, no longer able to fight in the Westminster arena, devoted the remainder of his life to fighting, socially and professionally, his masters, the Court of Aldermen. "He cared for nobody, no, not one;" would leave the City when he chose—on one occasion he absented himself for three weeks, without even leaving his address. He lived in the Old Jewry, and died there, at enmity, I may say, with everyone.

Of James Fraser, his successor and my predecessor, it would be difficult to speak too highly. Although a Scotchman, as his name betokens, his lot was cast in an English regiment, the 35th or Royal Sussex, which he entered at the age of sixteen, and rose to command. He then exchanged to the 72nd, now 1st Seaforths; but, seeing no prospect of active service, sent in his papers, not a year before war broke out with Russia. The step was irrevocable, and bitterly did he repent it when it was too late, for idleness did not suit him. He was without employment for some months; then, hearing of a female reformatory somewhere in the neighbourhood of Vincent Square, about the first of the sort started, he applied for and obtained the governorship—if it could be dignified by such a name. It was a wretched berth, and the work was most distasteful to him; but he only filled it for a

SIR JAMES FRASER

short time. The Chief Constablenesship of Berkshire became vacant ; he was successful in his application for the post, and migrated to that county, where he spent the happiest years of his life, among his firm friends being the Walters, proprietors of the *Times*. Fraser made such a name for himself in the county that, on the death of Sir Richard Mayne, Sir George Grey sent for him and appointed him to the Commissionership of the Metropolitan Police. Fraser returned to Berkshire to receive the congratulations of every magistrate in the county, and was preparing to leave for Scotland Yard when he received a letter from the Home Office intimating that Colonel Henderson—afterwards Sir Edmund—had been very highly recommended, and that Sir George Grey had decided on appointing him to the vacancy. A straighter man, or one less likely to break his word, than Sir George Grey it would have been then difficult to find. On this particular occasion the less said about his conduct the better. Fraser felt his treatment very much, but within a few months was successful in gaining the City appointment, which, from some points of view, may be regarded as a more desirable one.

Prior to the Crimean War our cavalry soldiers alone wore the moustache. In '55 the privilege of wearing that lady-killing appendage was extended to all branches of the service, and when Sebastopol fell and the troops came home, moustached and bearded warriors were plentiful in the streets of

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London. Fraser—one of the old school—wore only very small whiskers, and this, if it did not gain him many votes, certainly gained him one. “I’ll tell you why you had my support,” said a Cornhill tradesman to him; “because your face wasn’t all covered with ‘air.”

Shortly after Fraser’s death I was present at a dinner in one of the City halls, when the chairman proposed my health and complimented me on having made the City Force the most splendid police force in the world. In replying, I said: “I lay no claim to having done so. The late Sir James Fraser made the Force what it is by twenty-seven long years of constant, effective, and unostentatious work. All I claim is to have kept it as I received it from him.”

Everything Fraser did he did well. When the United Service Club—sometimes called “The Senior”—was, owing to some old-fashioned “Rules and Regulations,” going downhill, he was asked to take the chairmanship of the committee and pilot the vessel through the breakers. The present highly prosperous condition of the club testifies to what he did when at the helm.

Nobody had a higher opinion of Fraser than the Duke of Cambridge, who used frequently to look in at the club of an afternoon. He knew all about the contest in the City for the Commissionership of Police, and that Fraser was a candidate, and on several occasions had a talk with him on the sub-

MORE OF FRASER

ject, and wished him success. Shortly before the election Fraser mentioned incidentally that a certain Colonel—who shall be nameless—was also a candidate. “What,” said the Duke, “Colonel Blank opposing you? Never heard of such a thing—never heard of such a thing, by God! I’ll tell him what I think of his conduct. He’s in the Club now;” and, notwithstanding Fraser’s endeavours to pacify him, off he walked to the other end of the morning-room, where the Colonel in question was seated, and rated him soundly for his assurance!

Napoleon it was who, in speaking of one of his officers—gentle as a woman under ordinary circumstances—said he had the “iron hand in a velvet glove.” No man could have been a better exemplification of the iron and velvet than James Fraser; under a very quiet and peaceful exterior there lurked a determination of character one would never have dreamt of.

Lord Mayor’s Day is a very busy day for the City Police. There is the Show to begin with, and the Banquet to end with, and officers and men have some nine or ten hours of continuous duty. Both Commissioners issue manifestos, published in the *Times* and other leading papers, that no procession “other than that of the Lord Mayor” is to be in, or proceed through, certain streets, more particularly those in the neighbourhood of the Guildhall, where His Majesty’s Ministers are entertained by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the

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City of London, this prohibition holding good for twelve hours. I was always early at my office on the morning of November 9, Sir James generally putting in an appearance about eleven o'clock. In the year 18— (the exact year need not be mentioned) a mounted man from Scotland Yard handed in, at 8 a.m., a written notice giving us warning that a procession coming from the North would pass through the City at 5 p.m. This incomprehensible message I handed to Sir James when he appeared. Taking a pen, he wrote hurriedly, "This is in direct contravention of your own orders." This he read to me, but he added something which he did not read to me, nor did he tell me the answer he received, if he got an answer at all. He merely told me that, instead of going westward at his usual time, he would remain in the office all day.

In the City—a very small area—mounted men are not required. There are only two on the establishment, whose duty it is to ride in front of the Lord Mayor's carriage, to escort him when he goes in state, whether it be the few hundred yards from the Mansion House to the Guildhall, or on his journeys to Court, or, still farther, say to Croydon or Richmond. In addition to those two, who, having lots of riding, could ride, we used to mount other twenty men—all ex-cavalry soldiers, who could not. One swallow does not make a summer and one day on a horse does not make a horseman;

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moreover, a dragoon's seat is an artificial seat, soon lost. It was indeed a ghastly sight when the twenty fell in at 11.30 ; you would have thought not one of them had ever been on a horse before. Many a time I have ordered one man's stirrups to be taken up three holes, and another's let down as much. Had men and horses come direct from Poole's in Savile Row they could not have been more "tailor-made." They were a danger to themselves and a danger to the crowd, and we had always to fall back on the Commissioner at Scotland Yard for assistance—his men, brought in from the outlying divisions, being constantly on mounted duty, and thoroughly efficient. On the day of which I write we had forty men lent us, under Superintendent Butt. Pardon this equestrian digression, and let us return to our sheep. I knew Sir James would never allow a procession to enter the City at five o'clock, and, as I sat on my horse in the Guildhall Yard, I wondered what steps he would take to stop the ~~one~~ of which we had had notice. I was not kept long in suspense. At four o'clock he came round from the Old Jewry. "Can you get two hundred men together, Smith?" he asked. "Easily, sir," I replied, "if you will give me a quarter of an hour," and I had the men drawn up within the time. "Very good ; now attend to me and see that you understand my orders. March those men to the City boundary, taking Superintendent Butt and his mounted men with you, and stop, by force

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if necessary, that procession from entering the City.”

The procession, I would explain, was sure to be escorted by mounted men—processions always were in those Socialistic and Clerkenwell Green days—and thus, if the procession persisted in continuing its route and entering the City, there would be a free fight between the two police forces of the Metropolis, in which, moreover, one troop would find itself pitted against another in mortal combat! I knew if I disobeyed Sir James’s orders he would ruthlessly dismiss me, and I knew if I carried them out the story was sure to improve in the telling, and that my future career stood a very good chance of being ruined. There was still the redeeming clause “by force if necessary,” and as I rode alongside Superintendent Butt—who was evidently far from happy—I determined upon trying diplomacy. “Who will be in command of the mounted men escorting the procession?” I asked him. “Inspector Blank,” he replied. “Ride forward, then,” I said, “as fast as you can, and explain to him the whole situation, and tell him he will do me a very great favour if he will wheel to the right and make his way westwards, avoiding the City altogether.” After sitting patiently for twenty minutes I descried Butt cantering back alone. “It’s all right, sir,” he shouted, and my anxiety was over, or nearly over, for I had still to face Sir James. On getting back to the Old

DEATH OF FRASER

Jewry, I gave him an account of what had happened. He looked a little disappointed, but very soon, I fancy, realized the difficulties I had had to contend with. "Think no more about it," he said. "After all, it's just as well you have returned without any Scotland Yard scalps at your saddle-bow."

Colonel Lewis, a retired Grenadier Guardsman, nearly ninety years of age, Sir John Adye, and Sir James Fraser, the youngest of the three, though in his seventy-seventh year, all lived close together in Onslow Square or Onslow Gardens, and the Putney bus used to pull up at the club every evening at six o'clock, the conductor, if possible, always reserving seats for so distinguished a trio. I joined the club in '87, and many a time have I seen the veterans start for home. One day there was something of great importance to myself to be decided in the City. "I am very anxious indeed to hear how that goes," Fraser said to me, the evening previous, "but, as you know, Smith, I am off at six to the minute." "I am sure to be here before that time," I said; but, as ill-luck would have it, I was delayed, and did not reach the club until seventy-three. I never for a moment thought I should find him still there, but there he was, anxiously waiting in the upper hall for my arrival. On hearing that everything had gone favourably he was greatly pleased. "Lady Fraser will think something has happened to me," he said, rather

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anxiously. "Now I'll away, Smith." He died that night.

When speaking of anyone just deceased, I have heard him remark on more than one occasion: "Ah, well! he'll be forgotten in a fortnight."

I can only say of him that he is not forgotten by me, and never will be, and I cannot keep the tears from my eyes when I think of our final parting that April night.

XXI

OF THE GREEN LANES WHERE THE WHITE SHEEP
GRAZE, AND OF OTHER LANES WHERE THE
BLACK SHEEP BROWSE—OF THE X DIVISION
AND OF THE C DIVISION, AND OF THE DAYS
“WHEN WE WERE YOUNG”

THOUGH the burden of my song is crime and criminals, sometimes I feel inclined to stray from the beaten track, to leave the streets of London, the pavement and the asphalt, and wander in the green lanes of sweet reminiscence—in the green lanes of the X Division—that division of all others, numbered from A to Y, to me the most interesting. Extending from the Harrow Road, within a short distance of Paddington Station, in a north-westerly direction to where the counties of Middlesex and Hertford meet, it embraces every variety of matchless scenery. In the narrow lanes of Eastcote and Northwood, reminding one vividly of Devonshire at its best, the constable with X on his collar brings his hand to the salute. Hay, such as you see nowhere else, is made on its meadows—made as it can be made by adepts in the art—cut, turned,

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stacked, and under the rick-cloth in thirty-six hours. Wild-duck in hundreds swim on its lochs, "rocketers" in thousands meet their inevitable fate, and many a glorious twenty minutes has Harrow Vale given to the health-seeking denizens of the great Metropolis. In its sylvan glades are sheep and lambs, snow-white as those on the Grampian Hills. Black sheep there are, too, in profusion. What section of society is exempt from such quadrupeds?

And now, when I come to think of it, I am unconsciously leaving the white sheep for the black, and switching myself back to the beaten track "*dans le monde des réprouvés*"—that world which, as Darby the Blast said when avowing his preference for the dock to the witness-box, "I am, God help me, most used to."

With the X Division we have little to do; with the C Division much. This Division is, and has been for many years, "*sans peur et sans reproche*"—all credit to Sir Edmund Henderson, Mr. James Monro, Sir Edward Bradford, and Sir Edward Henry. To let sleeping dogs lie is sound advice; but I promised to say something more of that Division, and I mean to say it. No man stood higher in the estimation of the public as a fearless disciplinarian than Sir Richard Mayne, yet, in his reign, the whole C Division was corrupt to the very core. Officers and men were in the pay of the women of the Haymarket. Sergeant Ballantine, in his

“LEAVES OF A LIFE”

“Experiences,” says: “The constables upon the beat were in the pay of the worst and most troublesome of those who infested the streets, in consideration for which they allowed them to annoy the passengers with impunity. . . . At last the scandal attained such large dimensions that it became necessary to transplant the entire Division to some other district.”

Montagu Williams knew London as well as Ballantine, or better. Let us hear what he has to say in “Leaves of a Life”: “There were several houses in the immediate vicinity” (*i.e.*, of the Argyll Rooms) “which opened and commenced business at about the time that the doors of the Argyll Rooms were closed. In the Haymarket was the Piccadilly Saloon. It had no licence whatever. . . . The fun there would commence about 12.30. Someone stood at the outer door, and half-way up the passage was the man who took the entrance-money. There was a regular drinking-bar on the left-hand side as you entered, and at the end of the room were three musicians. The police were supposed to visit such houses as this at least once every night, and what used to take place—for I have seen it with my own eyes—was simply a ludicrous farce. A knock was given at the outer door by the visiting inspector, whereupon the word was passed, ‘Police!’ Some two or three minutes were allowed to elapse, and then the inspector, accompanied by one or two subordinates, entered the building, lantern in hand.

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The interval of time had been sufficient to enable all the bottles and glasses to be whipped off the counter and placed on the shelves underneath, innocent coffee cups being substituted in their stead. Sufficient time had also been given to enable the three musicians to vanish through a doorway. . . . Here they remained until the police, having gone through the usual sham of walking round the room, had taken their departure.”

Every word of what Ballantine and Williams say I can corroborate. Both show good taste in not alluding to “67”—the mystic *soixante-sept* as we used to call the house—where a constable—whose salary, I imagine, must have exceeded the Home Secretary’s—stood nightly at the door.

In the early sixties, when the Division was transplanted, I knew every night-house in the Haymarket. All bar Coney’s were most respectably conducted. All the gay women you met in them were above suspicion; all known to one another; all in their own society; and most of them—poor girls!—more sinned against than sinning. Some of them, no doubt, were worse than others; but I honestly say you were less likely in those prehistoric days to be victimized and cheated in the much-abused dens of the Haymarket than you would be in the present racing and bridge-playing age in a Mayfair drawing-room, or in many country-houses of the “nobility and gentry.”

Rose Young’s and Sally Sutherland’s were

“ KATE’S ” AND “ CONEY’S ”

small, comfortable little bars, where you could sit and smoke your pipe and, illegally, drink very fair gin-and-water ; Kate’s (Kate Hamilton’s), on the other hand, was a very expensive house to visit. There were many drinks on the counter ; but “ champagne ” was called for by nearly everyone. What this beverage was made of I am unable to say. Many times I have been fool enough to pay for it ; but I never was fool enough to drink it. It could not even have been the pure juice of the gooseberry, for the women instructed by Kate to ask for “ fizz ” would leave it almost untasted. This symposium—a very long, low room, situated in Prince’s Street, and running right through to Leicester Square—as well as the Piccadilly Saloon and the other drinking-booths adjacent, the police used to visit nightly ; and the ludicrous farce described by Montagu Williams I have also seen dozens of times “ with my own eyes.”

Coney’s was the only dangerous establishment in the neighbourhood. Old Count Considine says : “ A cut-glass decanter, well aimed and low, I have seen do effective service.” I never saw such a weapon used at Coney’s, but tumblers and soda-water bottles used to be hurled across the room more frequently than was conducive to comfort. Coney originally kept a “ hell ” in San Francisco, where he amassed a very considerable sum of money ; and his ambition, apparently, was to conduct his London house on similar lines. When

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a man was chucked out into the street, the chances were he would lie there till picked up by the milkman in the morning. Provided no one was actually murdered, the police, to a man, like the Levite, "passed by on the other side." Coney's, independently of an occasional shower of missiles, was a trying place for any gentleman, properly so designated. Some of the worst bullies in London, notably the Kangaroo, were nightly visitors. That ruffian and cur—for he would "curl up" instantly if boldly faced—would pull the cigar out of a gentleman's mouth, sit down beside him, and calmly smoke it, annexing his gin-and-water as well.

Coney, in addition to being a patron of the ring, was proficient at poker, euchre, and every other game played in the city of earthquakes. All were familiar to him as household words. One summer night in '69 I looked in at Coney's. There were not more than a dozen persons present; but among them I was pleased to find a friend, a young Coldstreamer, who could take uncommon good care of himself, there or anywhere else. Coney and a Russian nobleman—so he styled himself—were playing cards. Bob Blank, the beardless warrior, was watching them, and the Kangaroo was watching him, whom he knew far too well to interfere with. The nobleman—if he came from any part of Russia, I'll be bound it was Siberia—was a sinister-looking rascal with a solitary stud

COLDSTREAMER AND CONEY

on his bosom about an inch in diameter “All is not gold that glitters,” and it must have been a bogus jewel, or some of the company would have appropriated it. He had, or pretended he had, little or no knowledge of the English language. Presently, “You’re not playing fair, Coney ; you’re cheating him !” exclaimed Bob. “Quite correct, Captain,” said Coney, taking a cigar about the size of a policeman’s truncheon from his mouth, and slowly expelling the smoke—“quite correct, Captain ; but he’s trying to cheat me, and I know the game just a little bit better than he does.”

Coney, having won all the nobleman’s money, picked a quarrel with him, and, with the help of the Kangaroo, emptied a bag of flour over his immaculate suit and chucked him out into the street.

Concluding that the fun—as far as that house was concerned—was over for the night, Bob and I, after warmly congratulating Coney on the admirable manner in which he conducted his establishment, and the promptitude with which he dealt with evil-doers, adjourned somewhere else.

The life that we—I mean most of us—used to spend may appear very shocking. On reflection, I fear I have not repented quite as much as I ought to have done. I was young then, and I know myself well enough to know this : that, were I young again, I should to a certainty now be

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looking for some of the old haunts, and—worse luck to it!—be unable to find them.*

Many men begin by leading a desperately fast life, and end by going to the opposite extreme. Such a man, a few years my junior, came into the dining-room at the New Club, Edinburgh, not long ago. We had not met for years. He had his table put beside mine, and we talked till everyone had left the room but ourselves. As dinner progressed he became more like his old self. I asked him if he remembered certain nights we had spent together—more especially one when we “kept it up” till seven o’clock on a winter’s morning. His face lightened, and, looking apprehensively at the solitary waiter left on the field, he exclaimed: “It was all very wrong—very wrong indeed, I suppose; but, by Jove! it was good fun.”

Had this man his youth restored to him, would he make a better start the second time? I think not.

The “Shrieking Sisterhood” would have us believe that “the evil” can easily be stamped out. So it can, by stamping out young men and young women; but in no other way.

And *à propos* of my firm convictions on this point, it is not essential that the young men should

* In “Old Mortality” Scott tells us—speaking of “John Balfour, called Burley,” who never lacked a text to justify a murder—that “in the younger part of his life he was wild and licentious.”

MAIDS OF SORTS

be handsome and the young women pretty; the only essential is that they should be young, or at any rate moderately so, as demonstrated in the following tale related to me by an uncle.

In beautiful Blankshire, one of the loveliest counties in the South of Scotland, there lived—about the beginning of last century, when duelling was rife—a well-known and popular laird, who, from a mistaken sense of honour, fell in the prime of manhood. His establishment was a large one. Maids of all sorts—housemaids, kitchenmaids, laundry-maids, and every description of maid—were there to be seen, all young and all as attractive in looks and demeanour—for the lady of the house was particular—as could be found. Unfortunately, it so happened that these young beauties were of what might be termed a light-hearted disposition. First one, then another, suddenly discovered that the place did not suit her, and finally the whole lot disappeared. “What can be the reason of all this?” said the lady to her spouse. “They’re a precious deal too good-looking,” he replied, “with a dozen and a half stablemen and footmen about the place, that’s all.” “Then I will never have another good-looking girl in the house,” said his wife, “as long as I live;” and a batch of women, whose age and looks ought to have been sufficient guarantee for their respectability, stiff in the joints and flat in the feet, were shortly thereafter demurely parading the corridors recently tripped over by the pretty disreputables.

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The owner of the mansion smiled grimly. "Nous verrons," he said to himself. He had not long to wait before it was discovered that the ugly ones were no better than their predecessors. The lady, now much aggravated, spoke with warmth. "My dear," she said, "if we must have" (the word was monosyllabic) "in the house, we may as well have pretty ones;" and, even as the Dowager Empress returned in triumph to Peking, so did the original lot to their dovecots.*

While writing in this jocular vein, no one more sincerely deplores than I do the terrible tragedies that have from time immemorial resulted, and must always result, from girls falling madly in love with heartless men. The Bishop of London says, "While drink slays its thousands, lust slays its tens of thousands." This, I hope his lordship will pardon me for saying, savours of exaggeration. Drink and lust go hand in hand, but not in one case out of a hundred is the latter the predisposing cause of crime. In Pritchard's case, forty years ago, it undoubtedly was; in the case of Bennett, the Yarmouth Beach murderer, hanged on March 21, 1901, it was also. This man, tired of his wife, strangled her. He lusted for another woman. Had the Bishop said that when lust is the domi-

* "Human nature is essentially vicious"—so said Lord Salvesen, one of our eminent Scotch Judges, in giving evidence before the Divorce Commission, and so said I many long years before his lordship's verdict; and had Lord Salvesen added, "Women are essentially frail," it would have been equally true.

DRINK AND LUST

nating factor it makes a greater fiend of a man than drink, I certainly should have been at one with him. Were I to write what I know of the Yarmouth Beach case, few would believe me. The details are revolting beyond description. During Bennett's trial at the Old Bailey he showed not one symptom of feeling, and laughed heartily every now and then at some parts of the evidence.

A case in which I was more directly concerned, though not resulting in actual murder, brought to her grave a trusting and loving woman. A young Dragoon—a better-looking fellow I have seldom seen—just the sort of man to take a woman's fancy, with an "exemplary" character, no less, met her at Canterbury and married her, having married another woman in Edinburgh two years previously. The English girl doted on him—a more heartless scoundrel never lived. He was tried for bigamy at the Central Criminal Court, the woman he had deceived dying of a broken heart on the very day of his trial! This consummate liar told me a plausible tale, laughing as he did so, of how the Scotch girl had tried to catch him, and it was principally through my exertions that he escaped punishment. He never went near his English "wife," though he was living within twenty minutes' walk of where she lay dying, even to ask her forgiveness. I only discovered the truth after his trial; had I known it before, I should have moved heaven and earth to get the brute his deserts.

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A far more typical case illustrative of my contention is that of Mary Eleanor Wheeler, alias Pearcy, who, at the age of twenty-four, was hanged at Newgate on Tuesday, December 23, 1890, for the murder of Phœbe Hogg and her infant child at Kentish Town on October 24 the same year. A more brutal murder was never committed: the woman Hogg's skull was fractured with a poker, and her throat was cut from ear to ear; and the infant, the medical evidence went to show, was choked or smothered. The murderess was a pretty woman, quiet and well-mannered, whose countenance gave no indication of ferocity, but only of a great sadness. How did she come to do this awful deed? The answer is to be found in Mr. Justice Denman's speech after the jury had returned a verdict of "Guilty." "A prurient and indecent lust has brought you to this." The man Hogg, for whom she lusted, was "a vile and loathsome creature." Not until he was a married man—married, moreover, to a woman whom he neglected and ill-treated—did he make love to Mary Wheeler, and his love turned the woman into a perfect fiend. She believed in him as she did in her God, pitied him for being married to a woman unworthy of him, and with the most devilish ingenuity plotted to rid the man of his wife and marry him herself. Mrs. Hogg being taken seriously ill gave her her opportunity. Hogg, at her request, took her to his house, and made over his wife to her charge, and

NEWGATE

Mary Wheeler's nursing went a long way towards restoring her to health. Confidence being established, Mrs. Hogg, taking her baby with her, went to have tea with Mary Wheeler, and met her fate. Not one word of regret for her crime did the murderess express ; she did not look on what she had done as a crime. Unholy lust for her paramour tore to shreds every atom of morality, obliterated every instinct of purity inherent in woman. On the morning of the day before her execution she was visited by her mother, when she showed little or no emotion. Hogg had promised to call at Newgate in the afternoon to bid her a last farewell ; but as the long winter day wore on, and hour after hour passed, she saw he was not coming—the man she worshipped had deceived her again ; then she broke down utterly, sobbing and wailing for hours.

When next morning—her last on earth—came, she was perfectly calm, smiled when we entered the condemned cell, and shook hands with Mr. Duffield, the chaplain, whom she thanked for all his kindness. Mr. Duffield had indeed been kind : constantly with her since her condemnation, he had striven to get her to confess her guilt and make her peace with God, but up to the eve of her execution she asserted her innocence, and that “ she knew nothing about the murder.” Half an hour before her death, however, in reply to another appeal from him, she said, “ The sentence is just, but the evidence was false ”—not intended for a con-

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

fession at all, in my opinion ; but the chaplain seemed thankful to get even that from her. I am not much given to make excuses for criminals of this woman's type, but, bloodthirsty murderess as she was, when I saw her standing on the scaffold, from my soul I pitied her. Three weeks had made a terrible change in her looks, and reduced her to a perfect skeleton. She was quiet, kind, and gentle in her demeanour, and had it been in my power to let her go free, and put the rope round the neck of the man who had ruined her, I should have done so. A merciful God will judge her and him.

To revert to the Royal Commission, and the recommendations which it might have made. Some twelve or fourteen years ago a raid was made on a gambling-den in the West of London, the police bagging a large number of both sexes. In giving evidence before the magistrate, an inspector of the Metropolitan Force, amidst roars of laughter, described the majority of the women as "respectable prostitutes." What he meant, of course, was women who were not associated with bullies, and who would never rob or blackmail their "clients"; who lived in respectable houses, and not, like the women of the Northumberland Avenue gang, in rooms furnished with "sliding panels."

I am well aware that a Bill for the State Regulation of Vice will never find its way to the Statute-book in this country. No Government which introduced such a Bill would be in office for

THE "CHIEF" COMMISSIONER

a week ; but surely, in the interests of young men who run dreadful risks from such blackmailers as Chicago May, women of the D'Angely type, known as "night-walkers," getting their living on the streets, should be put under some police supervision. Were they registered, and made to report themselves at the police-office of the district, and notify any change in their address—as ticket-of-leave men have to do—it would go a long way towards checking what is of nightly occurrence in London and its suburbs. That a change for the better can be effected I am confident, and to look the matter straight in the face is the most sensible plan towards that desirable result.

I thought I had done with the Royal Commission, but yet another word—finally, lastly, and in conclusion.

When I was summoned to give evidence before the Police Commission, I sat in Caxton Hall for two long days, but never was called upon to enter the witness "chair." During all this time the head of the Metropolitan Police was uniformly spoken of as the Chief Commissioner. On one occasion, when Sir Richard Mayne was in the witness-box at the Central Criminal Court, "You are the Chief Commissioner of Police?" was the first question put to him. "I am the Commissioner of Police ; there is only one," was the reply. I believe, but am not quite certain, that Sir Charles Warren was the first head of the force

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

to put the prefix of "Chief" to his name, and there the prefix has remained ever since. In issuing any manifesto in the Press on Lord Mayor's Day, or on any other day, does the Commissioner so designate himself? Certainly not; the title he assumes is the "Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis." If it is assumed in the one instance, why is it dropped in the other? The Commissioner in question is no more entitled to the prefix of "Chief" than he is to the affix "of the Metropolis." The City is no unimportant part of the Metropolis, and the police of the City are not under his command — never were, nor, I think, ever will be. What the official in question should be called it would be presumptuous in me to suggest. Commissioner of Metropolitan Police or Commissioner of Police for the Metropolitan District might be appropriate. Possibly the Right Honourable Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department may see his way to invent a dignified and legal appellation for his subordinate at Scotland Yard.

XXII

THE CITY OF LONDON IMPERIAL VOLUNTEERS— HOW THEY LEFT FOR THE FRONT, AND HOW THEY RETURNED

“WHEN the C.I.V. left the City for the war, the police were taken by surprise. The arrangements were totally inadequate. The streets ought to have been kept clear for their progress,” etc. So wrote the newspapers. Now, to begin with, the Volunteers did not “leave the City” for the war. They were attested, and clothed, and equipped in the heart of the City certainly, at the Guildhall ; but the night before they left they spent in the barracks of the Hon. Artillery Company, half a mile beyond the City boundary, within the jurisdiction of Sir Edward Bradford, and when handed over to me at Ropemaker Street, no General on the face of the earth could have got them into any formation whatever. The “City Trained Bands” had the privilege of marching through the City with bayonets fixed, drums beating, and colours flying—a privilege still enjoyed by the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, the Buffs, the 7th Battalion

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Royal Fusiliers, the Royal Marines, and the Hon. Artillery Company, who were raised and recruited from the "Trained Bands"; and no doubt the same privilege would have been willingly accorded by the Lord Mayor to the Imperial Volunteers raised and equipped in the City. It would have looked very effective to see that regiment take its departure in similar fashion, but it was a sheer impossibility. On January 12, when a detachment attended a farewell service in St. Paul's, Colonel Mackinnon writes: "The enthusiasm of the populace was very marked, *and the formation of the ranks could not be kept.*" (The italics are my own.)

They were expected to take seventy minutes on the road to Nine Elms. The time consumed was three hours and twenty minutes! But let me explain. It was neither Sir Edward's intention nor mine, to attempt such a thing—to get them into formation. The men were leaving fathers and mothers, wives and sweethearts. What comments would have been made had we done what the papers said we ought to have done? Men going out to fight for their country—separated from those they loved best, and whom many of them were destined never to meet again in this world! It was truly a case of the Wolf and the Lamb. Whatever the police did, censure was sure to follow.

As to being "taken by surprise," a reference to

THE DEPARTURE

my orders issued on the evening of the 12th will show how much truth there was in that insinuation. Had I listened to my superintendents, I certainly should have been. "Surely, sir," they urged, "at six o'clock on a winter's morning there won't be much of a crowd." "Be prepared for the largest crowd seen in the streets of London in modern times," was my reply, "and have every man, down to the last-joined recruit, on duty." The Lord Mayor, Sir Alfred Newton, proposed to halt the battalion in front of the Mansion House, and address them from the balcony. I would not entertain the idea for one moment. To attempt to hold such a crowd for ten or fifteen minutes, with thousands pressing on them from the rear, would have been madness. Had those in front fallen, a second edition of the disaster at Moscow might have resulted. To conclude, the whole of that uncontrollable crowd was kept moving, guided through the City, and handed over to Sir Edward Bradford, and not one man, woman, or child was seriously injured.

At Nine Elms Station there was certainly a scene of the wildest confusion, when, owing to the want of proper precautions by the railway officials and Metropolitan Police, the crowd overran the station and had it all their own way.

The C.I.V. did well at the front—how well a perusal of the *Journal*, giving an account of the battalion services by their Commanding Officer

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Henry Mackinnon, shows—and when they were expected home all London was ready to welcome them. The crowd, enormous as it was when they left, would, I was confident, be greater still when they returned. Queen Victoria had intimated that if her soldiers were to be half torn in pieces, she would rather they had no reception at all; but she was assured that the streets would be cleared for their progress, and that she need not be uneasy on that head. To clear the streets on such a day and keep them clear was beyond the power of man.

When—at what hour, I mean—should streets be cleared? At an hour when, if not cleared, it would be impossible to clear them afterwards, would, I submit, be a logical reply.

At 7 a.m. the approaches to the Guildhall, King Street, Queen Street, the Poultry, and Cheapside, were impassable. After trying at that hour to make my way through the crowd, mounted and with an escort, I gave up the attempt and retreated behind the barriers.

At St. Paul's, where there was to be a Thanksgiving Service, I had some three hundred men isolated and unapproachable. How they were getting on I had no means of discovering. Men can't fight on empty stomachs, and for twelve mortal hours the officers and men of the City of London Police had little or no food. By 7 p.m. the battalion had forced its way yard by yard from Paddington, and reached its destination.

THE RETURN

I have described the scene when they left; when they returned it was indescribable, yet again not one man, woman, or child was seriously injured.

All this I was determined to explain should occasion offer, and my opportunity came at the Mansion House when the Lady Mayoress, daughter of Lord Mayor Green, presented prizes to the Swimming and Athletic Club of the City Police on December 4. Needless to say, the Lord Mayor is all-powerful in the City, and I feared what I proposed saying might be deemed by him irrelevant and out of place altogether on the occasion, and that he might request me to resume my seat; but nothing could exceed his patience and kindness. I am sure he felt I had a grievance, and was pleased that I had the opportunity of making what the Press was good enough to describe as a "spirited defence" of the City Force, accused of having failed to accomplish what they, as well as his Lordship, recognized as an impossible task.

On the night of the marriage of the late King Edward the City was brilliantly illuminated, and the crowd in the streets was enormous. Six corpses were laid out on Ludgate Hill and two more at the Mansion House! What would have been said of me, I wonder, had I returned such a Butcher's Bill

To form an accurate estimate of the number present on the occasion of a large crowd assembling

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

is far from easy. I recollect some rough work in Hyde Park one Sunday afternoon, resulting in Police Court proceedings next morning. "How many thousand should you say were in the Park?" was one of the questions put to an inspector of the Metropolitan Police. "Not less than 50,000," was the reply. "Quite 100,000," was the reply of a reporter to the same question. Some discrepancy here—merely the trifling difference of 50,000! On the day of Queen Victoria's funeral the crowd was enormous; on the Embankment, when the crew of the *Powerful* marched from Whitehall to the Royal Exchange, the crowd, though not, I should imagine, one fourth as large, was irresistible in its strength. The crowd I have alluded to, when eight lives were lost, I have heard described as unprecedented, but I still think the crowd which accompanied and awaited the C.I.V. on their return from South Africa was far and away the largest of modern times.

XXIII

MORE OF THE LONDON POLICE AND THEIR DUTIES
—AND MORE OF THE DETECTIVE FORCE AND
THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES—AND OF SURPRISING
DECISIONS TOO HURRIEDLY ARRIVED AT

THE duties of the London police become more onerous year by year. The detection and prevention of crime and the apprehension of criminals the public think is their first and most important duty, and the public is right, but the regulation of vehicular traffic is now almost of equal importance. Comparisons are odious, and I do not mean to draw them. Still, looking to the fact that superior officers of police from foreign countries have on several occasions visited London to see for themselves how the street traffic is regulated, and that they have openly expressed their admiration at what they saw, I may be pardoned for asserting that the system pursued in the Metropolis leaves little to be desired. It would be strange were it not so, for few would believe how much care is taken in the education of "pointsmen." At Hyde Park Corner, the Marble Arch and Piccadilly

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Circus in the West, at Blackfriars Bridge, Liverpool Street, and the Mansion House in the East, they work with clock-like regularity. Men are never stationed at such places until they have given satisfaction at places of less importance, and have shown that they can work, not only expeditiously, but sensibly and without undue haste or flurry. Many and many a time in the City, pointsmen, seeing my intention to cross from one side of the street to the other, have, almost at the risk of their lives, thrown themselves into the middle of a line of trotting vehicles without one word or note of warning to the drivers, and many and many a time they have got from me, not the praise they expected for their promptitude, but a severe "wiggling" instead. The horse or horses of the first vehicle stopped are thrown right on to their haunches, and if the asphalt is slippery or the wood pavement greasy, they are as likely as not to come down. A pointsman should look quietly at the advancing vehicles, and hold up his hand to the driver, say, of the third or fourth from him. He, seeing the pointsman's action, has time to pull up without cruelly wrenching his horse's mouth or throwing him down.

When Mr. Bayard invited me to visit New York as his guest, my disappointment at being unable to accept his invitation was very keen. I wished above all to judge for myself of the smartness and efficiency of the police force of that great city; but

OF "RESTS" OR "ISLANDS"

though I have not had an opportunity of doing so, Americans have on many occasions had opportunities of forming an opinion of the City of London Police when under my command. Their verdict has been, I am proud to say, uniformly complimentary. The "rests" or "islands" in the vicinity of the Royal Exchange, the Bank of England, and the Mansion House, where pedestrian and vehicular traffic goes on in an uninterrupted stream from about 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., used to be, from their position, a source of danger. They were all altered on my recommendation, and now accidents, notwithstanding the vast number of cyclists, motors, and motor-busses, are of rare occurrence. I had a complaint from a contumacious M.P., "without an H to his back," as Ellen Terry says, of the unnecessary length of time the traffic was "held up," causing great inconvenience to business men hurrying from the City to the "House." "On several occasions," he said, "I have been kept waiting more than five minutes." For my own satisfaction I put on four plain-clothes men to note the longest time vehicles were delayed. The report I got was "fifty seconds."*

The Town Clerk of the City, the late Sir John Monckton, and I were great friends. Many a kindness I received at his hands. He was a most enthusiastic Freemason, and twice took me down

* The men were on the watch, relieved by others after four hours' duty, for two days from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

to the Royal Masonic Institution for Girls, situated close to Clapham Junction. A more admirably or economically managed institution I have never seen. One Saturday morning Monckton came over from the Guildhall to my office to tell me the girls were coming up from Clapham that afternoon to see the sights of the City, and to ask me to make arrangements for their safety. They were to go first to the Guildhall, then to the Art Gallery, and finally to the Mansion House, thus entailing their crossing at Cheapside, and at a still more dangerous place, in front of the residence of the Lord Mayor. The Children of Israel crossed the Red Sea successfully, but, if all tales are true, very hurriedly. I determined that the little girls should cross the thoroughfares of the City comfortably and leisurely. To take off the chariot-wheels of the solicitors, stockbrokers, *et hoc genus omne*, would have been an extreme measure. I thought if I put on twenty additional constables and remained myself till the girls got across in safety it would be sufficient. Everything went right, and Monckton was profuse in his acknowledgments of the assistance I had given him. "Well, now," I said to a pretty little girl, as the teachers in charge were marshalling the procession for the homeward journey at the west door of the Mansion House, "what part of the day did you like best? Was it when you were taken into the Art Gallery to see the beautiful pictures, or was it when the

“BY HIS BOOTS”

Lady Mayoress gave you a bun and some sweetmeats?” “Oh no,” she replied; “it was when you ordered all the cabs and omnibuses to stop, and we walked across quite slowly without any danger.” Sensible little girl!*

“You can tell him [a policeman] by his boots.” This I have heard asserted in bygone days, and one hears the same assertion still. Delusions die hard, and this is a delusion pure and simple. Before I began my police career all constables in the City Police, whether in uniform or plain clothes, received three shillings per month “boot money,” and that allowance they receive still. They boot themselves as they please. Of course, their boots must be properly made, or the men would be ordered to change them and get others, but there is no regulation pattern. You have no more chance of telling a policeman than you have of telling a civilian “by his boots.”†

While on the subject of boots, I recollect during

* Pointsmen in my predecessor's time used to receive 1s. and 2s. 6d. per week in addition to their pay, depending on the importance of the point at which they were stationed, and the first-class men—*i.e.*, at 2s. 6d.—were exempt from night duty. This arrangement I found created dissatisfaction in the force, and I directed that 1s. 6d. per week should be the pay of all pointsmen, and that all should take their turn of night duty in rotation.

† The men of the Metropolitan Force used to wear ready-made boots, and fit themselves as best they could. Now they get an allowance as in the City, and the change must conduce greatly to their comfort.

FROM CONSTABLE TO COMMISSIONER

the time of the "Whitechapel murders" the absurdity of constables on night duty going their rounds in anything but "silent" boots was freely commented upon. Sometimes such boots are useful. They are easily improvised. I have known men take off their boots and stalk their prey in stockings as silently and successfully as the "man-eater" stalks the tethered goat in the jungle. But we do not all look on noiseless boots from the same point of view. A friend of mine living in Eaton Place, who suffered from insomnia, told me he liked to hear the heavy tread of the policeman in the dark winter nights as he passed his door. It gave him, he said, a feeling of security.

Of officers of the detective force—I mean men who have reached the rank of inspector—it would be almost impossible to speak too highly, and I never, save on one occasion, sent one of them abroad who did not acquit himself creditably. This man followed a woman, by my instructions, to Switzerland, and wired back twelve hours after he got there: "Successful. Leave with her for London to-morrow." Immediately on receipt of this I wired to Liverpool, Glasgow, and other ports: "Woman apprehended. Take no further trouble." Two days afterwards the inspector appeared at my office without the criminal. The woman in Switzerland was her sister. There was a strong family likeness between the two, but the mistake was absolutely inexcusable.

OF BARONETS AND "BIG FOOLS"

In this case I must admit I acted rashly myself. The woman had baffled us for weeks, and I was quite at a loss what to do, when one Saturday morning a letter—very short and to the point—was handed in to my office by a commissionaire. "The woman you want," it said, "is in Switzerland," naming the place and hotel where she was living. The writer was a well-known baronet about whose character the less said the better. I knew he was not to be trusted, and drove up instantly to his club to see if I could find out his reason for writing, and how he got his information. "Sir Blank Blank has gone North, sir, and won't be back for a fortnight," was the reply I got from the hall-porter on asking for him. As I got hold of my fair friend shortly thereafter, it was not worth my while to interview the baronet on his return to town. From what motive did he write to me? I have often wondered. Was it really in the interests of justice, or did he mean to put me on a false scent? If from the latter reason, he deserves credit, for the ruse was absolutely successful.

Only quite recently, when talking of detective officers with a Judge still on the Bench, he told me he had occasion to send for a detective-inspector of the Metropolitan Force, and that he found him "as big a fool" as any he had ever met with in his life. It is bad manners to contradict a Judge, and dangerous, moreover, in court; but we were only having a friendly talk, and I told him that his

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experience was certainly unique and widely different from my own.

Some fifteen years ago a banking-house in the Metropolis came reluctantly to the conclusion that they were being robbed by one or more of their employées, and called in an eminent accountant to audit the books. After a careful investigation he told them that their suspicions were well founded, and that they had a thief on the premises. A detective-inspector was called in, a plan of campaign was organized, and after a fortnight's watching the inspector pointed out, very much to the amusement of the firm, one of the partners as the depredator. The inspector did not belong to the City Police, and all I could do, when they were pleased to make merry at my expense, was, as in the last case, to assure them that their experience was unique.

Had I reminded them of Sir John Dean Paul and his partners, the boot, I think, would have been on the other leg.

After the Judge's and the banker's opinion of detective-inspectors, it was gratifying to hear what a racing man—a sharper practitioner I have seldom met—deemed them capable of doing. This man had a long string of horses in training at a village in the Midlands, six miles from a railway-station. The village, which consisted of ten or a dozen cottages, was all occupied by men in his service. A stranger was seldom seen in the neighbourhood, yet he asked me to oblige him by sending a

TRAINERS AND TOUTS

detective down to find out which of his boys was giving information to the touts. To get a footing in a village like that, and circumvent a lot of boys in a racing stable—generally about as sharp young gentlemen as can be met with—was, I told him, what I would never ask any man to attempt. No; detective officers cannot work impossibilities, but what men can do my inspectors used to do. I am confident that the public, were they aware of the responsibilities and of the great difficulties they had to contend with—far greater thirty or forty years ago than at the present time—would give them as much credit as I do.

Take a case like the following. On one occasion a bank clerk embezzled a large sum of money, and got clean off to the Continent. From information received, I was certain he had gone to Athens, and, being very anxious to effect his capture, I rang for the superintendent, and asked which of the inspectors was available. "Robson"—suppose we call him—"is here, sir," was the reply, and Robson was summoned.

This man was an excellent linguist, of good presence, and with no outward or visible signs of the Old Jewry about him, and had done extraordinary work, both for my predecessor and myself.

"Well, Robson," I said, "you must cross to-night by the evening boat. You have a first-rate photograph of him?" "First-rate, sir; I would know him anywhere." "You don't think he

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knows you?" "Very unlikely, sir." "You cannot touch him in Athens, you understand, even if you find him there. We have no extradition treaty with Greece." "I am aware of that, sir," was the reply; and off went Robson. He arrived in Athens on a Saturday night, and next day he went to the English Church. He was shown into a pew already occupied by one man, who was kind enough to share his Bible and hymn-book with him, and whom he instantly recognized as the man wanted. Sauntering out at the conclusion of the service, the inspector followed the clerk, and saw him enter a house. All foreigners used to be registered at Athens, and to give a false name was an infringement of the law. Robson discovered at the English Consul's that the clerk was living under an assumed name, and went and informed the police, who gave the man notice to leave the country at once, Robson following him across the frontier. Neither in Italy nor Switzerland could Robson touch him, but he followed him from country to country, till, after a fortnight's chase, he was able to get him extradited, and to bring him over to London, where he got five years' penal servitude.

I will not attempt to explain the extradition treaties between Great Britain and Continental nations, for a most excellent reason: I don't understand them myself. They are most complicated and puzzling. They puzzled me forty years ago,

EXTRADITION

and they puzzle me still. Four Americans—the Bidwells, George and Austin, Edwin Noyes, and George McDonald—were sentenced to penal servitude for life in 1873 for forgery on the Bank of England. Noyes was arrested in London; George Bidwell in Edinburgh; McDonald got over to New York, but was extradited; and Austin Bidwell, after a series of adventures, got safely to Cuba. He was eventually extradited also. I thought at the time, and I still think, that his extradition was illegal—rather hard for him if it was!

The City of London Police is highly favoured from several points of view. It is the only force in the United Kingdom that is exempt from Government inspection. What goes on in the Old Jewry nobody knows save the Commissioner and the police committee, if he chooses to tell them.

The Commissioner has a fund placed at his disposal by the Court of Aldermen from which he can reward officers who have shown exceptional ability in the execution of their duty, and thus I had ample means at my disposal for rewarding deserving officers.

But to return to the imbeciles for whom the Judge and the banker had such a sovereign contempt. Some months after Inspector Robson had successfully brought home the man he had followed to Athens, I sent him over to New York on a somewhat similar errand, the man wanted on this

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occasion being a stockbroker's clerk. When he arrived there, he found, with the help of "Pinker-ton's," a most efficient agency who always assisted me to the utmost of their ability, that he was just too late. The clerk had left for Chicago. He followed him there, and found he was too late again. He then traced him as far west as the railway went in those days—a long and weary journey. At last the terminus and the station, a miserable wooden shanty, came in view. It was only a single line, and, as they were nearing their destination, the inspector said to himself: "The man can't have much to do here. What more likely than to find him on the platform waiting to see the train come in?" Robson, thinking it safer, got out at the wrong side of the carriage, and walked round by the end of the train. There were only three passengers besides himself, one being a farmer, with whom the clerk was living some way farther west. The latter made not the slightest resistance when the inspector put his hand on his shoulder, and promised at once to give no trouble either on the return journey by rail, or when crossing the Atlantic.

And now the inspector's anxieties are over? Far from it. It would be an exaggeration to say they are only just beginning, but his anxieties will end only when he has his captive lodged in Moor Lane Police Station (the district of the City in which the crime was committed)—then, and not

HOME TO FACE THE MUSIC

till then. He has no doubt an assurance from his captive, but will the man keep his word? As he (the clerk) is nearing England, he begins to realize what he has to face—a master who has trusted him, and friends and relatives who used to believe in him. Overcome by an uncontrollable impulse, he rushes from the inspector's side as they are walking the deck together, jumps overboard, and ends his miserable life. Dozens have done so.

Then, again, the inspector, as he is nearing home, keeps thinking of his expenses, which have mounted up to nearly twice what he anticipated. Will the stockbroking firm be pleased to see him? Will they commend and reward him, or will they find fault with him? I recollect one of my best men coming up to my room after an absence of five weeks. "I did everything," he said, "they sent me to do. I lived economically. Not one farthing did I spend unnecessarily, and instead of thanks I have got abuse." "Never mind," I said; "you have done your work as I expected you would, and if they don't reward you, I will."*

I have laid these facts before my readers in the hope that they will recognize the serious difficulties officers of police encounter in the exercise of their profession, and will believe in them as I do.

* The Corporation are now, at all times, ready to come forward should a prosecutor decline to be responsible for police expenses. They have, of course, the "City's cash" behind them. Still, their action is not the less to their credit.

XXIV

CONCLUSION

AT the commencement of this volume I mentioned three events in my career, of which now, according to promise, I give details.

How I rose from the rank of constable to the rank of Commissioner in less than six years is not so extraordinary as at first sight it might appear. It used to take about eight years to reach the rank of sergeant, but Fraser, having known me for nearly ten, had made up his mind, so I was afterwards told, to promote me at once, without making me pass through the various grades, or do uniform-duty in the streets.

When asked by Sir Edward Bradford to take command of the Metropolitan Police on the occasion of the visit of the Shah to the City, in the year '95, I saw insurmountable difficulties in the way, and told him so. Howard, his second in command, a thoroughly capable officer, might, I feared, feel aggrieved, as well as the other Assistant-Commissioners, with whom I was on the best possible terms ; but Bradford had made up his

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mind, and I was most anxious to meet his wishes. Even fixing the route the procession was to take, and everything connected with it, west of Temple Bar, he left in my hands. "If I can get the Queen's sanction to the arrangements I propose making," I said to myself, "all will be plain-sailing"; but Her Majesty was at Balmoral, which complicated matters. Had M. Blériot been available in those days, I should have asked him to fly up (such a kite as his would have made the grouse lie on the Aberdeenshire moors); but I had to content myself with the telephone.

Many questions were asked—as to the route, as to the discontent among the shopkeepers in Regent Street, who, understanding that the procession was to pass their way, were making arrangements to let their windows, etc.; but at last everything I asked leave to do was sanctioned, and when the day came I had the honour of commanding both forces.

In the year '96 I was created a Companion of the Bath, was summoned to Windsor Castle, and received the decoration from Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. Next year I was created a Knight Commander of the same Order, and received that decoration also from Her Majesty, at Osborne. In '96 Lord Salisbury wrote me an autograph letter, on May 16, telling me that the Queen "had been pleased to direct" that I "should receive the Companionship of the Bath on the occasion of Her

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Majesty's approaching birthday," and that it was "very agreeable" to him "to be the instrument of making this communication" to me; and doubtless all the other recipients of that birthday honour—some twenty in number—had a communication from him in similar terms. Sir Matthew Ridley also wrote most kindly from the Home Office.

In '97 the first intimation I got of the higher decoration was in the columns of the *Times* in a railway-carriage on the Aylesbury line. Some men think more of decorations than others. The "Jubilee Lord Mayor" told me he had hundreds of requests from men, inside and outside the City, to bring their names to the notice of the Home Secretary. "Ask, and ye shall receive;" but to get an honour by asking for it is not the way I should like to receive it, and I have satisfaction in thinking that neither directly nor indirectly did I give one solitary hint to any influential friend I had on the subject.

The Queen, as I have already stated, was graciously pleased to promote me, presumably because of the four months' hard work in the year of her Jubilee, and because she was thoroughly satisfied with the way in which that work had been done.

As early as February 17 I had a letter from Windsor Castle intimating that the Queen, on June 22, "would attend a short service, to be held outside St. Paul's Cathedral, on the steps at the

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west end," and that "the following are those who are being invited to serve on a Committee to consider the necessary arrangements.

"I should add," the writer said, "that the Prince of Wales also proposes that you should be asked to serve on a Committee to consider the arrangements to be made for the Royal Procession on the 22nd June."

The St. Paul's Committee consisted of the Archbishop of Canterbury (Benson); the Bishop of London (Temple); the Bishop of Winchester (Davidson); the Dean of St. Paul's; the Crown Equerry (Sir Henry Ewart); the Hon. Reginald Balliol Brett, now Lord Esher; and myself.

The Procession Committee consisted of the Duke of Portland (Master of the Horse); Colonel Byng, afterwards Lord Strafford; Colonel Carington; Lord Methuen; Sir Edward Bradford; Sir Henry Ewart; Mr. Brett; and myself.

I recollect well the first meeting of the Cathedral committee, when we had a very animated discussion. The Dean (Gregory), still in harness, was anxious that the Aldermen of the City should stand facing the royal carriage with their backs to Ludgate Hill. "They will look so well in their robes," he said, "and they will have a beautiful view of the cathedral." I differed from him, and said the Mansion House was the place for them; it was their home, where all of them had been or hoped to be. "From there," I remarked, "they will have

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a beautiful view of the Bank of England, an institution in which they take a far deeper interest"—at which the Bishop of London was irreverent enough to laugh most heartily.

It would be difficult to exaggerate what both Court officials and police did to make June 22 a success. Luckily, bar one week, we had "Queen's weather" throughout. We had three rehearsals at St. Paul's at 7 a.m. At the Royal Mews, Buckingham Gate, the west front of the Cathedral, where the Queen's carriage with the eight celebrated cream-coloured horses was to halt while the service was being held, was all laid out, as near a facsimile as could be made, and every morning for weeks a representation of the coming ceremony was gone through; men shouted and cheered, banged doors, fired guns, and made every conceivable noise, and my own charger was sent to the mews to take part in the drill. The first rehearsal took place on March 17, the second on April 26, and the third on June 12. Lord Roberts was present on one occasion, and went carefully over the arrangements made for the Indian contingent, of which he was to be in special charge; twenty grooms from the royal stables, representing the Princes who were to ride in the procession, were also present. Limited though the space was, the rehearsals, "to which the success of the carriage procession was mainly due," were in every way most satisfactory. On June 14, at 6 p.m., we had

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a musical rehearsal, when we had what we wanted—an enormous crowd. Some two or three days later, to make assurance doubly sure, the Duke of Connaught, Lord Methuen, Bradford, and I drove over the whole route, leaving Buckingham Palace at 8 a.m., and taking more than two hours to accomplish the distance.

The Queen herself took the deepest interest in all that was going on. She had everything reported to her, and nothing seemed to escape her notice. I was in constant communication with the Crown Equerry, who occasionally forwarded to my office cuttings from the Press. What Her Majesty evidently was particularly concerned about was the safety of her subjects, that no untoward accident or loss of life should mar her Day of Thanksgiving, and that her guests—foreign royalties, Indian Princes and Ambassadors—should get back to Buckingham Palace with the least possible delay.

Peel's statue, as every City man knows, stands at the west end of Cheapside, close to St. Paul's and the General Post Office. There was sure to be a tremendous crowd there after the service, when the Queen was making her way to the Mansion House, but the place, from its configuration, was easy to "hold," and I was in no way apprehensive of a disaster at this point of the route. My confidence, however, was not shared in by one of the leading papers, which thus delivered itself, in a paragraph sent me by Sir Henry Ewart. "It is

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not a question," wrote the intelligent reporter, "as to whether anyone will be killed at this corner; the question simply is, *how many?*" This cutting I received, as far as I recollect, on the 19th, accompanied by a letter expressing a hope that I would be able to reassure the Queen, who, after seeing it, had become very uneasy. I was glad to be able to do so, and in my reply said what I felt—that the paragraph was silly in the extreme, and evidently written by someone with little or no knowledge of the locality in question.

As to the return from the Cathedral of Her Majesty's guests, that was a far harder nut to crack, and it was not till after many a look at the map, and many a walk late and early through the streets, that I decided on adopting a route I had never yet adopted on any return journey from east to west—that is, sending them by the front of Newgate along Holborn Viaduct and Oxford Street.

I was told that evening that the order which prevailed in and around St. Paul's, and the absence of anything approaching to brutality on the part of the police, had very much impressed those who, previous to that day, had only been conversant with the manners and customs of Continental constabularies.

On the afternoon when the relief of Mafeking became known in the City, thirty-six watches, in addition to purses, breastpins, and every sort and description of what Mr. Wemmick designated

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“portable property,” changed hands in ten minutes’ time in front of the Mansion House. An American, who knew New York and its crowds, told me he had never seen anything there approaching to what he witnessed that day. Thieves and pickpockets in the centre of the crowd were cheering for Baden-Powell, French, Kitchener, and Roberts; knocking people’s hats over their eyes, and shaking hands effusively while they were stripping them literally of everything they possessed, the Lord Mayor and his guests looking down from the balcony charmed with the enthusiasm and loyalty of Her Majesty’s subjects.

On the historic day, some particulars of which I have just given, there was wonderfully little crime. Wednesday, the 22nd, was, comparatively speaking, quiet, and on the afternoon of the 24th I had intended going to Carlton House Terrace to thank Sir Matthew Ridley for his kindness in bringing my name to the Queen’s notice. That morning, however, I met his cousin, Mrs. Cookson, of Meldon, in the Row, who told me she had been dining with the Home Secretary the previous evening, that she had thanked him for having remembered me, but that he denied having any hand in my promotion. “I came across the announcement in the *Times*,” he said, “as he did himself, and was pleased to see it, but my opinion was never asked on the subject.” On cross-examining Bradford next day, he said in as many words what Sir

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Matthew Ridley had said to Mrs. Cookson. I then tried a certain official, and explained to him that I was looking for someone to thank, but the more I questioned him the less he said. Court officials can do what most people can't—they can hold their tongues.

As I was writing these, the last lines of my narrative—for I must now bring it to a close—in my Edinburgh house, a runaway trap dashed past the windows at lightning speed, collided with a lamp-post, and upset. The driver was shot out, falling heavily, and six or eight big cans of milk—for that was the cargo—followed him in a perfect shower-bath. Fearing he was hurt, I ran out to assist him. He was standing on one leg, the other being badly cut, damning the horse, which he described as an “awfy wild brüt,” while a little terrier was eagerly lapping up the property of the Craiglockhart Dairy Company, Limited. The man did not cry over the spilt milk; he knew it was no use. Why should I cry over my misspent years? Crying won't bring them back; and perhaps, after all, they scarcely deserve such severe condemnation as I myself have given them.

In the parish of Robertson, in the beautiful county of Roxburgh, where I live, I do all I can afford to do—it is not much—in the district—rather Pharisaical this, by the way. Only last year, after sending some small charitable donation to “the minister,” I had a visit from him. After

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thanking me very kindly, he said he wished there were one or two more religious men in the parish. "Wait a bit," I said; "I am not a religious man—never was, and fear I never shall be. My only religion is sincere gratitude to God Almighty for having spared me for so many years, for having mercifully preserved me on three separate occasions when the Scythe-bearer was actually at the door. I thank Him every night on my knees, but that is all my religion." "Not a bad religion," said the minister—"not a bad religion by any means." Let us hope he is right.

Good-bye.



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